

B. UMBER, ARTIST.

BY METTA VICTORIA VICTOR.

I DIDN'T know what to do about pantaloons, and I told Gamboge so, when he came in. I was sitting up in bed mending my only pair. There was a frightful hole upon each knee; but long practice in patching had made me as dexterous as a woman, and I was getting the new pieces on so nicely that I flattered myself they would hardly be detected—at least, at the first glance. They would do very well for street wear, especially if I only went out in the evening, but to call upon a lady! and that, too, in the daylight! I appealed to Gamboge, the only friend I had, and to whom I appealed on all occasions.

"Bother the pantaloons!" he exclaimed, a little impatiently, for he had thought the impediments all removed.

"It is the pantaloons which bother me," I said, dejectedly.

"Can't you manage to make them do? It won't be very light. These fashionable women are more cunning even than we artists in the matter of light and shade. They know better than to put themselves in cross-lights, or in the candid shine of the mid-day sun. You'll find the parlors of a delicious darkness, very flattering to your wardrobe, my friend. That's a capital patch, old boy."

"I'm glad you admire it. But Miss Follett might not."

"I'd lend you a pair of mine, if you were not such a monster. It's a great pity, either that you are big, or that I am little, I don't know which. I've got two pairs, now; so I could afford to be liberal. Before my success at the Academy last year, I was nearly as bad off as you. But I couldn't mend like that!" He looked appreciatively at my patches.

"Really great minds are great in all things," I remarked, with my usual modesty. "But probably Miss Follett, being a million-hellress, knows too little of old clothes to do me the justice you have done me. She has taste, though, plenty of it. She knows a picture when she sees it, which is unusual for one of her sort. Isn't it curious, now, the fancy she has taken to that little bit of mine?"

I had managed to get a picture in at the Annual Exhibition, for the first time, and through the influence of Gamboge. It was a small thing, and obscurely hung; but it had attracted

the attention of a young lady, an amateur and an hellress. Her acquaintance was somewhat affected by artists; Gamboge had the honor of it; and when he heard her praise the unknown painter, he, by a master stroke of policy, proved his friendship for me, and obtained an invitation for me to accompany him to the morning reunions of the lady. She had also signified her intention of purchasing the picture, provided it was for sale. Of course it was for sale. The young man who sat patching his last pair of pantaloons felt only too happy at the thought. He would have been even better pleased, had it already been paid for; for then he might have gone to the tailor's at once, instead of sitting up, under the bed-clothes, and worrying himself about trifles.

"She has appointed to-morrow? I want to go so badly. And here I must lose the opportunity. What shall I do, Gamboge?"

"With the pantaloons?—darn the pantaloons!"

"I have, six or seven times."

"You'll be foolish if you let everything stand in the way of your going now, I tell you, sir. There's not only her patronage—perhaps her friendship—but the consideration it will give you, and the circle you'll step into, and the choice things you will see in her house—not only pictures and marbles, but articles of vertu, everything to gratify a taste like yours. And then there's herself! she is worth breaking your neck but to speak to."

"Oh, I would willingly break my neck for the honor of bowing before Miss Follett. But to go there with patches on my knees, that would require more courage, you see. Not but that I could bear a sneer from *her*; a sneer on the lips of a beautiful woman sometimes fires a man to proud achievements; but to see all those rows of supercilious mustaches curling at me—humph! I should get angry."

"Perhaps you can wear mine; you're only four inches taller than I, and a trifle heavier, of course. The fact is, I would lend you money to buy you a pair, but I haven't got it. My landlady was after me this morning, paid a visit to my rooms, caught me when I hadn't a chance to retreat, and I gave her all I had. I didn't count it; she'll make it all right."

"What a simpleton you are, Gamboge! I

don't wonder you are always in trouble, with fifteen hundred dollars' worth of commissions in a year. Do you know how much I have spent in the last twelve months? Just a hundred and twenty dollars."

"Oh, I lived upon seventy-five, one year, so you needn't boast. That was the year I wrote my letters to my mother lying upon my stomach on the floor, for want of table or chair. You paid the postage on those letters. You were better off than I then."

"And now—but I don't envy you, Gamboge. You deserve more than you have received."

"I am aware of it, old boy. Your luck will begin to come soon. You'll get the start of me in the race yet. You're so lucky, you know!"

I had finished mending my pantaloons, and had put them on, when my companion made this remark. The idea of my being lucky was so outrageously impudent that it threw me into a fit of laughter. There never before existed a young man so strong, healthy, and handsome as myself, with rather unusual genius, too, who had such a facility for getting into all kinds of predicaments.

"Don't laugh so, *don't*, for goodness' sake!" exclaimed Gamboge, as I rolled upon the bed in unreflective merriment.

His tone of distress quieted me.

"Don't you see what you've done?" he asked, reproachfully. "Look at your coat!"—more sternly—"look at it behind!"

I tried to obey him, but the situation of my eyes in my face prevented my seeing my back, and I had no mirror. But I *felt* the mischief. My coat was tender from long wear, and fitted me closely, from the fact that I had grown in weight and stature (upon bread and cheese) since first I put it on, and in my fit of untimely mirth I had split it from collar to tail.

"Now, then, you're ready for Miss Follett's reunion, I suppose!"

This outlying irony was very hard to bear at that moment; but I resisted the inclination to strike my only friend, and answered, desperately: "I couldn't help laughing, could I? If I didn't retain my proclivities for laughing, I'd like to know what would become of me."

"That is true," responded Gamboge, looking at me reflectively. "It is not every one who could be so merry as you upon such low diet, nor look so high-colored and bright, either. By the way, I wonder that fellow doesn't come up. I knew you'd be just getting out of bed, and I ordered the saloon-keeper down below to send up our breakfast; I haven't had mine, yet. Coffee and beefsteak, etc."

This news revived my courage, which had weakened at the sight of two halves of my coat, which I had pulled off and thrown upon the bed.

"Where will we have it, Gamboge?"

"Put that box upon the bed; we can sit upon either side. Here it comes, at last."

Maybe the waiter had observed that artists were queer people, for he arranged our repast in good style upon the pine box, while the dignity of his nose was undisturbed by the faintest hint of a turn-up. Politer than his betters, he did not even stare, until he was going out, when the canvas upon the easel attracted him so profoundly that he remained rooted before it.

"I say, sir, did you get up them 'ere chickens? they're done to a turn."

Although this remark savored somewhat of his profession, I was pleased by his honest praise.

"Yes," I answered, "I painted them."

"What might the price be, now, of the lot? There's seven in all, countin' that 'un as has his head hid in the grass."

Gamboge and I looked at each other.

"I might take ten dollars for the picture, from a person not able to give more," I said, presently.

"Whew!" whistled he, "that's more 'un the live ones'd be," and he walked towards the door. "But these'll last longer; won't have to cook 'em to keep 'em," and he walked back again. "There's some fellers as fancy animals; but birds was allers to my liking, and quail chickens above all!"

He laid a gold eagle upon the box by my side, and took the little bit of canvas from the easel. I heard him chucking to the birds as he went through the hall.

"Which shall it be, coat or pantaloons? I cannot get both."

"Coat, I suppose, from the looks of those remnants. But I must go. I'll call for you to-morrow, a little before twelve."

Gamboge went away, and I was left with a less pleasing task than the one of beginning my new sketch. I had decided differently from Gamboge; I had seen that the coat could be mended, so that, in a darkened room, it might not be particularly noticeable; and with ten dollars I could get not only a new pair of pantaloons, but boots also; and I now for the first time reflected that my studio slippers would not answer for making a morning call. I could not even go out to get these new articles until the coat was mended. The next two hours were given up to the most troublesome

and tedious of tasks; but I was kept from ill temper by the busy habit of my mind. The "coming event" which was casting its shadow before, in the shape of my present irksome employment, figured in the foreground of all my dreams. I had heard so much of Miss Follett, through my friend, that I was eager to meet her. She was beautiful, gifted, and a woman. Though rich, she was intelligent; though an amateur, the artists did not ridicule her. Gamboge, I knew, thought more of her than of any other lady; he respected her opinions, admired her tastes, and adored her beauty. More than all, he did not feel galled by her *patronage*. And she had selected my little picture for especial commendation—had inquired after the artist—had expressed a wish to own it! My heart beat, loudly and sweetly, the time, and I began to sing a Spanish song. I had nothing but black linen thread to sew with, and that tangles and snarls so, it is enough to upset the serenity even of a woman. The eye broke out of my last needle just as I was about to fasten the concluding stitches, leaving me in some unpleasant doubts as to the stability of my work. However, it looked tolerably, and I surveyed it with cloudy satisfaction, comforting myself with the memory of what Gamboge had said about the parlors, and hoping they would be as dim as one of his own distances.

I occupied myself during the afternoon with a fancy sketch of Miss Follett. Curiously enough, Gamboge had never described her; so I drew her according to my own liking—tall, majestic, with a low, white forehead, black hair, piercing eyes, and a superb bust.

In the evening, I went out and made my purchases, and got my clean shirt from the washerwoman in the next street.

"That darn down your back does show considerably," said Gamboge, when he called for me the next morning.

I saw that he began to feel nervous about presenting me, and my own pride took fire.

"Look here! look at me!" said I, "did you ever know me to flinch from an undertaking?" He surveyed my six feet of height, my cool air and impenetrable eyes.

"Come along, then; you can make your own way."

Miss Follett's footman looked so well dressed when he opened the door to us that I felt momentarily abashed.

The rooms were somewhat shadowy; but to me they seemed almost glaring, as I entered and found them just comfortably thronged,

cool, and perfumed, the silence disturbed, not driven out, by subdued voices.

When Gamboge spoke my name Miss Follett smiled her recognition of it; after addressing a few words to us, some one else came in, and we stepped back. I could look at her whilst she talked to others. Instead of being tall and majestic she was slender and girlish; her face was fair and pure; her voice incomparably sweet. She looked more as if she had been brought up by angels, than in a fashionable boarding-school. She may, or may not have been dressed in the mode; I only recall that her raiment was white and floating, clasped at the throat with an opal brooch. Immediately a deep sadness took possession of me; I did not analyze it; I felt her: the presence of wealth, luxury, art, taste, beauty, all things so agreeable to the artist-soul, and I recalled my lonely attic, bare, unfurnished, rude. Body and soul had flourished well upon plain fare seasoned with hope; but now, hope died out, and I felt all my privations crushingly. All this, perhaps, was in the gaze which I fixed unconsciously upon my hostess; for when her eyes met mine, after a time, they were arrested for a moment. I saw that she pitied me.

"You know none of my friends," said she, in a low voice, coming up to me, "except Gamboge. Will you not look at these engravings? they belong to the Turner Gallery. Are they not exquisite?"

I followed her to the table, and bent to admire them.

Rip!

I stood upright, and made some wandering reply. My back was to the window, and I could only think of my coat. I heard persons suppressing laughter, who were standing behind me.

"You do not like engravings? Here is a new picture; it was hung yesterday; but it seems to me to require more light. I will open this shutter—there! that is better. If it could be lowered a trifle—Mr. Umber, you are the tallest; will you, please, reach that cord?"

I reached to lower the cord, as desired.

Rip! rip!

It seemed as if the room was silent on purpose to make the report of the trencherous stitches more startling. People pressed around to admire the painting, and I took the opportunity of retreating towards a sofa; but I was blind with embarrassment, and stumbled against a foot-oushion.

Rip! rip! rip!

I knew, I felt the worst. My coat had yielded;

only the collar kept the two halves from falling apart. The company wanted to laugh, but was too well-bred.

"Umber!" burst forth Gambogo, "I told you not to wear that coat!"—he forgot himself, in his passion.

"Did I not spend two hours in mending it?" I retorted, as angrily. "I did not think it would serve me such a trick!"

This was too much for the gravity even of that high-toned *salon*. A burst of irrepressible merriment restored me to self-possession, and, turning to my hostess, I said: "You have obeyed the New Testament; Miss Follett, in bidding the beggar to your feast. My starved soul was so hungry for beauty—something more substantial than its own dreams—that it insisted upon coming, despite its outward appalling. But, like Cinderella, I have stayed too long at the ball—my finery has turned into rags again. In return for your kindness, if you or your friends would like to be present at one of my receptions, here is my card. I am at home every morning.

Bowing low, I handed her a piece of red cardboard which happened to be in my pocket, having been taken from a box of artists' materials which I had once ordered. Again the company laughed, more convulsively than before. In bowing, my coat had fallen apart over either arm. At that moment, I caught sight of myself in a large mirror; in spite of my accident, I swear I looked better than any man in the rooms; my eyes were blazing like stars, my cheeks were flushed, and a curious smile curled my lips. I saw, too, that Miss Follett was not laughing, but perhaps she had been, for there were tears in her eyes. Backing from her presence in regular court-fashion, I gained the street, leaving the two footmen staring after me in stupid astonishment.

The boys hooted at me, as I passed along; and presently a policeman laid his hand upon my arm.

"I arrest you," said he.

"What for?"

"For fighting. Isn't your coat all torn off your back?"

"You are an acute fellow," said I, admiringly.

"Anyways, you're getting up a rumpus. Aren't them boys all a yolling, and hooting, and running because of the figure you cuts? You disturb the peace. So come along, my gentle."

It did not take a very great amount of my aroused energy to knock the impudent M.P. down; but it was an unwise movement, and resulted in my being set upon by the crowd,

and hustled to the station-house. Appearances were against me. If my cell had been clean, I should not have cared so much for the night I was compelled to spend in it; as it was, I would not go to bed, but walked, three steps, forward and back, until daybreak. That morning, the officer whom I had assaulted appeared against me, and I was fined five dollars for wearing a ragged garment, instead of being given twice as much to buy me a new one. Such is justice! As I had not the required amount, I was returned to prison, from whence I sent forth a message to Gambogo, who, like the friend he was, soon came to the rescue. He was rather sullen, though, after we got away.

"You made such a fool of yourself yesterday," he remarked.

"It was my coat made a fool of me," said I.

"Come! let us hurry to your room; everybody stares at us."

"If you are ashamed of me, you can dispense with my company," said I, haughtily. And, turning abruptly away from him, I took an alley-way which came out near my place. Tired, hungry, and irritated, I entered my garret, with its cold sky-light looking down critically upon me and mine. For the first time, I loathed my crackers and cheese; but I would not go down in that miserable coat to get a cup of coffee, though I had some change in my pocket. I had not even the spirit to try mending it, but throw myself upon the bed to sleep. I would sleep; but when I awoke, what then? Four years of patient labor had accomplished this much—that I was poorer, more discouraged than ever. Yet Miss Follett had recognized my merit as an artist. Miss Follett—my face burned, and I pushed away the thought of her. No matter! I am tired, and I will sleep.

Awaking a little past noon, I put on an old blouse, well ornamented with grease, turpentine, and various pigments, went below and got my lunch; and coming back in better spirits, began to prepare my palette for work. The little heaps of color were harmoniously arranged, the brushes selected, and the easel, with its canvas already dead-colored for my sketch, set up under the sky-light, when I remembered that inevitable coat. I must mend it by daylight, for I wished to go out in the evening to purchase a fresh supply of crackers and cheese. I was obliged to go out and borrow a needle of my landlady. I had a faint hope that she would take compassion upon my desolate condition, and offer to perform my feminine task for me. I had read charming stories of the universal benevolence of woman,

feeding Mungo Park in African forests, and sewing on shirt-buttons for poor young men starving in attics. But I was disappointed; my landlady fumbled through her red flannel needle-book, selecting the rustiest of her rusty store, remarking, as she gave it to me: "She never knowed before as people that furnished rooms was expected to furnish needles likewise to tenants as done their own mending."

Rather damped in my ideas of the universal angelhood of the softer sex, I stole back with my rusty needle, and was well at work, when there came a knock at my door. Nobody ever knocked at my door but the landlady or Gumbo; I was comfortably settled, cross-logged upon the bed, and had no idea of disturbing myself; so I shouted out, "Come in!"

There was a little delay, and then the door unclosed and I saw standing, looking at me, Miss Follett, hesitating to enter, and with her servant behind her. She had taken my invitation to visit my studio in good faith, not dreaming that it was a place she would blush to enter. Studio! yes, of course! but it was also my bedroom, my dining-room, my dressing-room, my kitchen; furnished superbly with one chair, one pine box, one straw bed, a lot of frames, canvas, stubs of brushes, and rags stained with paint and oil, a tiny furnace with a tin coffee-pot, a few "things" in the shape of dishes, etc., upon a swing-shelf, some crayon sketches, three or four pictures in oil, an easel, and the lord and master of them all, B. Umber, artist. Humph! I looked like an artist, sitting there cross-logged mending old clothes! I had but one possible claim to the recognition of Miss Follett, and that was my claim as an artist, and now I was presented to her in the unlovely and unromantic aspect of a tailor.

The beautiful woman who stood before me, blushing at finding herself in so odd a place, when she saw my occupation, forgot her momentary embarrassment in a laugh.

"Truly, Mr. Umber," she said, merrily, "it is evident that you need a wife."

"A wife!" said I, bitterly, getting upon the floor as gracefully as was consistent with my former position. "How soon do you think I will be able to afford one, at this rate? Just look around you, if you are not too much shocked, Miss Follett, and see to what a poetic home I could bring a bride. Will you come in? I suppose not. I will not urge—"

"Oh, I shall come in, Mr. Umber. I'm wearied with climbing three flights of stairs, and I want to see what you have precious to show me. I didn't come to see furniture nor

dry-goods, I came to see pictures; and besides," she added, blushing and smiling as she seated herself upon the only chair, "I had a little business."

How lovely, how elegant she looked in that rich purple robe and black velvet mantle, so costly, yet so plain, ample, waving, lustrous, unbroken by meretricious lines and angles of fringe, gimp, or flouncing! My skill in draperies rendered me competent to appreciate her toilet, so simple, so—heavens and earth! if she had not sat down upon my newly-filled palette! As the truth flashed over me, I broke into a cold perspiration.

"Oh, Miss Follett," I fairly groaned, "get up, *do* get up! You are ruined! don't you know it?"

"What is it?" she cried, alarmed at my manner.

"You are sitting upon my palette, and your elegant cloak is ruined."

"Oh, is that all?" said she, recovering her composure, and not showing the least vexation at the sight of the accident. "It was entirely my own fault, and you mustn't feel badly about it. Fortunately I wore a scarf under it, and the sun is so warm I shall not need the cloak going home."

She took it off, and gave it to her servant. She could *afford* to lose a hundred-dollar garment without losing her sweetness of temper; she would have the pleasant excitement of purchasing another. I thought her white Cashmere scarf even more becoming than the cloak.

"What is this?" she asked, examining the sketch I had made on the day before yesterday.

"That is my fancy of *you*, Miss Follett, before I saw you."

"You must have been disappointed," she remarked, looking up at me with exquisite candor; "this is so full of splendid womanhood, and I am but a slender little thing!"

She was pleased to commend my pictures in terms that warmed my heart into all its old hopefulness. Finally she concluded her brief visit by saying that she came to see if I would paint a companion to the piece she had selected at the Academy, so that she could take both home when the Exhibition was over; and by asking me to call at her house when I felt inclined to examine the works of art she had collected. It was plain that she had not laid up anything against me on account of her cloak, keeping up an appearance of amiability while cherishing a secret spite, as is the custom of some women.

If you are of an imaginative turn, I need not tell you what thoughts filled my being after she was gone. Vague, unintelligible dreams, all the more delicious because they were impossible, all the more splendid because they contrasted with the privations of my daily experience. It seems to cost us nothing to dream, yet most often it costs us very dear. Abstemious as a hermit in my real fare, I was extravagant beyond emperors in my visions. I knew that my soul was fitted to mate with that refined woman's soul; that my physical feet, if properly clad in patent-leather gaiters, would not walk amiss amid the luxuries of her salons.

Twilight was deepening around me and my fantasies, when there came another knock at my door. Warned by the past, I went to open it, and received from a port errand boy a large package. "Paid," was marked upon it, and the boy had departed before I ascertained its contents. Upon opening the wrappers of stout paper, I found an entire suit of new clothes, very good, and very tasteful, and evidently selected with a knowledge of my size. Deep mortification struck to my heart. "She has no delicacy," said I, "to send me such a gift as this!" I tossed it scornfully across the bed. "She does a charitable thing for me as she would do it for her washerwoman or a beggar of the streets. If she wished to assist me, why did she not pay me for the pictures in advance? That would not have hurt my pride; but now—I despise her!"

I walked across the room rapidly until my agitation was somewhat subdued; then I proceeded, with a wonderful coolness and precision, to refold the garments, rearrange the envelopes, and write upon the outer one, in bold, firm characters, Miss Follett's address. Then I descended with the bundle to the street, got the boy in the shop beneath to undertake the delivery of it, in consideration of a dime; and returned to my apartment, feeling that I had repented the insult in the most dignified manner. Five minutes had scarcely elapsed before Gamboge burst into my presence in his usual unceremonious manner.

"Have they come?" he asked

"What?" I replied, shortly.

"The clothes. They should have been here before now. You see, old boy, I had a run of luck to-day—sold a picture; so I thought I would get the clothes. You needn't grumble and look proud; I only intend to lend you the amount until Miss Follett pays for the picture she has taken.

"Gamboge!" cried I, starting up, and tearing my hair, "I am the most consummate fool alive! I thought *she* sent them; and I've just sent them back again by a boy."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared my companion, "sent Miss Follett a suit of men's clothes. O ho! but won't she be amazed? A very appropriate and delicate present, upon my word, ha! ha! ho! ho! ho!"

"What 'll I do, Gamboge, if it ever gets out?"

"O ho! they 'll never get out—never! those garments will not, unless it be upon the person of her tall footman. You've lost a good suit of clothes, Umber—and made a ridiculous goose of yourself."

"They have been gone but a few minutes, Gamboge. The boy is little and I am long, I will overtake him. You stay here until I come back."

I darted out, in my slippers, blouse, and an old velvet cap, and hurried in the direction of Miss Follett's. It was impossible to tell what particular avenues and streets the boy would take to reach her residence; but if I could only get there ahead of him, I could prevent his delivering his bundle. But if I had long legs, the messenger had a long start, and just as I reached Miss Follett's number, I saw him giving the package to the footman. He passed me, as he sprang down the steps, but did not recognize me, and went whistling off. The man stood for a moment in the open door, looking down the street; during that moment I formed a desperate resolve; I darted up the steps, snatched the bundle from his hand, and ran away with all my might. The footman was nearly as large a person as myself. He ran after me shouting "Thief!" at the top of his voice. A policeman sprang from a corner and collared me just as the footman laid his hand upon my arm. They dragged me back, struggling, to the hall; the gas-light was turned nearly off, and Miss Follett was coming down the stairs, dressed for the Opera.

"The bundle was mine!" I said, striving to shake off the coarse hands which grappled me.

"What has the man been doing?" asked Miss Follett, gently. She was not frightened, neither severe. A real rascal would have blessed her for her forgiving manner.

"Turn on the light, John!" she said.

I wished I were dead, or even buried alive. The man thought me a desperate rascal, and held me in a vice.

"It has my name and address upon it; how can it be yours?"

She turned from inspecting the address to

look at me. The gas-burners were in full blaze.

"Mr. Umber!"—she looked startled and angry.

"Open it, Miss Pollett. If you think you need the contents of that bundle more than I, you are welcome to them."

She opened the package and gave it but one glance.

"There has been a mistake," she said to the men. "Release him; he is an acquaintance of mine. These things are evidently his."

"They was given to me by a boy, and they had your name on, madam, if you please, and this chap came along and snatched 'em away," said the footman, still glaring at me savagely, though he released his hold. (He called me "chap" on account of my blouse, I suppose.)

"Never mind, John; it is, doubtless, all a mistake. You can go, sir, and thank you for your trouble," to the policeman.

"Miss Pollett," I said, when the M. P. had departed, and she stood, looking dignified and cold, awaiting my exit, "there has been another of my outrageous blunders. They take to me, naturally. I cannot explain this one. I shall never disturb you with any more. Farewell!—forever"—the last word was whispered to myself, as I went down the steps about as unhappy as an idiot can be. I had forgotten the clothes; and the footman threw them out after me. At the foot of the steps I met Gamboge.

"What has happened?" he inquired, still shaking with laughter.

"Go in, and find out. I shall never be seen in these parts again!"

I broke from him and hurried home, where I flung myself upon the bed in a fit of disgust and despair. All was lost; nothing won. Gamboge would be ashamed of me; Miss Pollett would ridicule me. That coat—that wretched old coat—was the cause of all my misery. I seized the offending garment and tore it in shreds. Forgetful of its three years of faithful service, ungrateful for past worth and worn-out good looks, I rent it in tatters. While busy with the work of destruction, several pieces of money dropped out of some unknown corner, jingling upon the floor. I saw, by the dim light of my candle, that they were gold; and upon gathering them up, I found there was a hundred dollars. How did they come in my coat? I had no idea how; and I was not going to make any more absurd suppositions. I would take the money more coolly than I had done the clothes. I put it carefully in my wallet, and was so subdued by the act, that I could go patiently to picking up the remnants which lay about, and stuffing them into the

little furnace; and this was the last of my unfortunate, fortunate coat. I went to bed, as stupid and sore, mentally, as if my mind had received a good thrashing.

The next morning I regretted burning my coat; for not only did it leave a bad odor of burning woollen in my room, but I had conceived the idea of rendering that long-suffering garment as immortal as brushes and paint could make it. However, I had a good memory, and the coat was indelibly stamped upon it, every darn, patch, seam, and grease-spot. I would take revenge upon myself, my fortune, my friend, and Miss Pollett, by painting a picture.

I went immediately about my work. About eleven o'clock Gamboge came to my door, and knocked loud and long. The key was turned, and I said nothing; so, supposing me to be out, he went away, muttering to himself through the hall. I did not want to see him, nor any one. For the present, the picture was my sole object. When that should be finished, I cared not what came. The future was a blank at which I took no pleasure in staring.

With feverish rapidity I sketched the main features of my painting upon a background already prepared. My subject was my own garret—that poor, plain room, with all its miserable accessories. In the centre, under the skylight, was my easel, and upon the easel a canvas. Upon this canvas, the face of Miss Pollett. This introduction of a picture within a picture was done with consummate skill. Her pure, girlish face, seemed rather to be beaming through the frame, in all its living beauty, than to be only its painted semblance. I represented her, as she was, hopeful, joyous, happy, elegant, with that air of high-bred ease mingled with youthful gayety. Yet in her eyes I left that momentary look I had seen there, as I bowed myself out of her presence at that hateful reception—a look of soul and sympathy, coming up with a mist of tears through her brightest smile. As she looked then, so she looked now at the artist who pictured it; for I, too, formed part of the scene. The artist sat before his easel; he wore the rent and ancient coat. His face could not be represented, except partly in profile; but there was in his attitude, as he sat and gazed at the exquisite face before him, despondency and passion both. You could see that he adored this beautiful portrait; and guess at the sad story of poverty and continually crushed aspiration.

It was too dark to work before I remembered that I had eaten nothing that day. Half famished, I took my supper in the cellar beneath,

and returned again to my garret. I was resolved that I would see no one until my picture was finished. I was in that exalted state of mind and body which can accomplish wonders.

The next day Gamboge again rattled away at my door. "Blast the fellow! I do believe he's committed suicide," I heard him exclaim; and then he stooped down and reconnoitred through the keyhole.

It seems that he had a glimpse of me; for he shouted, angrily, through that orifice beloved of eavesdroppers, "Say, old fellow! if this is the way you treat your friends, I'm off!"

What other course he could have taken, except to take himself off, I do not see, so long as I would not let him in. I was now rid of my best friend; a very comfortable thing, when a person gets in a melo-dramatic and mournful way; he came no more, and I worked for several days, twelve hours per diem, upon my picture. I spent almost as many hours reproducing the patches upon my coat, as I had done, originally, in making them. At last, the thing was done. Linger over it as lovingly as I might, I found not a light or shadow for my brushes to retouch.

Then I went to bed and was ill. Twenty-four hours I lay in a burning fever before anybody thought worth while to inquire about me. This was one of the pleasures resulting from getting rid of my friend. Finally, the waiter of the saloon, the one who had purchased my quail-chickens, made his way up stairs, and receiving no answer to his knock, opened the door and came in. He had a real quail, delicately boiled and served up on a slice of toast, which he had brought with him on a plate—but I was too ill to eat.

"I've noticed you lookin' kinder holler-eyed and wild, lately, and I was afraid you was slock. Beg parding, sir, for intruding, sir; but them chickens you painted has interested my feelings." And with a flourish, more becoming to his place in the gilded saloon underneath, than to my humble garret, he set about making me comfortable. You may imagine the taste and feeling of cold water to one who has lain in a raging fever, without a drop to quench it, for twenty-four hours. He put cool, wet napkins on my head, and gave me plentiful, ambrosial draughts. While he was still attending upon me, the door opened again, and my estranged friend and brother made his appearance with a lady on his arm.

"Ha! what's this? slock? That comes of making a goose of yourself."

"Are geese particularly liable to brain fever?" I queried, faintly.

"Come, now, don't joke about such a serious matter. Just look at his eyes, Miss Follett—big as eggs, and bright as coals."

She did look at my eyes, and I looked at hers. To hide that which I saw in them she turned away, and her glance fell upon the picture. I could see, from the profile view I had of her, the soft blush rising to cheek and brow, the sudden fluttering of the ribbons of her hat, where they lay against her bosom. I knew that she understood the story of the picture.

"Go for a dootor, waiter, and I'll pay you for your trouble," said Gamboge.

"Well, I reckon you won't," responded my friend of the white apron, indignantly.

"Of course not; you're my friend, James. But you need not go for a dootor; I shall get well without one. All I want is cold water."

"Mr. Umber," murmured Miss Follett, "you must sell that picture to me; of course you would not dispose of it to any one else. I will give you a thousand dollars for it. But I ought not to have spoken to you now. You must have absolute silence and rest. Farewell! I will come to see you when I hear from Gamboge that you are better."

Her hand rested for an instant upon my burning forehead, cool, soft, and fresh as a rose-leaf, its touch was sweet as a kiss; then she was gone.

After that I glided off into a strange world of visions. The shade was drawn over the skylight, the flies were driven from the room, and Gamboge walked about in my old slippers; noiseless as the figures which flitted through my dreams.

What more? I will not tell you of my fever-visions, nor anything of my rapid convalescence! With the freshness somewhat faded from my visage, my "high color" subdued, my well-rounded frame showing a trifling angularity, I went, one evening, alone, to Miss Follett's boudoir. She sat on the pretty rose-hued divan, playing with a bunch of roses, looking divinely beautiful, and thinking—of me. I knew she was thinking of me, for when I entered, and she saw me, I could read it in her ingenuous countenance. Without waiting for her to speak, I took the ottoman at her feet.

"How pale you are!" she said, gently, and the tears started to her eyes.

"Do you pity me, Agatha?" I asked, for the first time addressing her by her maiden first name.

"Yes, and love you, too!"

She was alarmed after she had spoken; but she knew as well as if I had dared to tell her

that my heart was hers, and so she drooped her head upon my shoulder and sobbed for very "pity and delight," for grief, gladness, confusion, timidity, and inexpressible joy.

Gamboge thinks it was very ungrateful for me to destroy the old coat; he thinks I should have saved it for the wedding, and to show to the children, grandchildren, etc. But Agatha is satisfied with the picture of it, which she has had hung in her chamber, where I am soon to be permitted to visit it.

"If ever your work-basket overflows, you can set Umber to darning the stockings," Gamboge says to Agatha; "owing to his early education, he'll be a great help to you in that line. He's as good at patching as painting."

Then my betrothed blushes and smiles so prettily, and looks over at me so tenderly, as if I were to be pitied for having had to mend my clothes. The soft little thing really thinks it must have been a hardship.

O Agatha! so pure, so noble, so exquisite, so womanly! blessings, blessings forever upon the Old Coat.

MISS SLIMMENS'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLOW FAMILY."

(Continued from page 536, June number.)



CHAPTER XVII.

"BLESS US! THIS IS PLEASANT, RIDING ON THE
RAIL."

I've come to ask a very great favor of you, Dora, if you feel equal to the task. I've been so poorly ever since that dose of rat poison that I took by mistake, I'm afraid I'm a-going into a decline. Doctor Burton recommends sea air; he says he knows of nothing but a change of air that'll do me any particular good, and I've about made up my mind to go to Newport for a couple of weeks. It's a very expensive place, I know; but I've made considerable money since I came into this house, and a young lady ought to see something of the world outside of her native village—specially if she anticipates ever making a good match. We often hear that

Distance lends enchantment to the view,"

and it may be that I shall be more properly appreciated in a new spear than I am in Pennyville—particularly if it's discreetly given out that Miss Slimmens is a *beauty*, a *blue*, and an *heiress*! I've made up my mind to afford the money for the tower; but I don't know what to do about them everlasting girls. Caturah's handy, and Susan's got so she can go ahead as well as I can; and if you'd just trouble to have an eye to the sugar, and the tea-caddy, and a few little things, I don't know but what I might trust 'em. My family's uncommonly small now, and they won't have much to do.

Thank you! Much obliged. But it's just like you, Dora; you're always ready to do a good turn for anybody that asks it. I felt

ruther delicate about putting any care on you, at present, though I don't ask of you to do a thing but to keep the keys. Yes, I do "need the change;" I realize it myself. I can hardly drag about the house this warm weather. And now that the matter's settled, what shall I wear? that's the great question. I expect my wardrobe'll cost me more than all my other expenses put together. I must dress genteelly, or I sha'n't stand any chance to make an impression. That white satin I got the time the Professor boarded here will do for one ball-dress, and my pink silk for another. I've got a handsome watch and chain, you know, and considerable jewelry, and if you'd lend me that pearl set Mr. Little gave you on your birth-day, I'd take good care of it and consider it a favor. You won't be going out much this warm weather to need it, and it just suits my style, don't you think so? Probably you'd never have had it if it hadn't been for my good-will, making a match between you and George; so you see I consider I've a sort of claim on it. He! he! I think a new white muslin, flounced to the waist, with blue trimmings and your pearl-set, will be sweet for another evening toilet. I'm going to take my new gray more-antique for a travelling-dress. I expect it will get ruined; but, considering that I'm going for the benefit of my health, and to see a little of genteel society, I guess I can afford it. There's nothing like making an astonishing impression at first. I hope those darling hats, with lace around the brims, and ribbons flying, will be the fashion again this season at the watering-places; they're so bewitching, and they'll be so be-

coming to my long curls. Ringlets, flowing from beneath a broad-brimmed straw hat, cannot fail to impart a coquettish appearance. I think I shall wear one during my promenades, whether other ladies do or not. I have hardly decided whether to adopt a playful or pensile demeanor; but, considering my delicate health, and that I am unaccompanied by an escort, I shall likely decide in favor of the pensile.

How soon? About a week, if I can get the dress-maker to hurry up my things. I shall ruffle the white muslin myself. I guess I've been out of the millinery business so long there won't be any odor of brimston follow me to Newport. I intend to pass myself off as a young lady of leisure, of only the most literal pursuits, who inherited my estates in Pennyville by contract. I wish I knew some agreeable person who was going along at the same time; I'm such a timid creature, and shall feel so unprotected in the cars. I sha'n't sleep much of nights till I'm ready, and the start is over; I feel so flustered by the prospect and the hurry and all, my nerves are quite unstrung. Taking that exterminator was one of the worst things I ever done. I shall send, to-night, by express, to Boston, for a new set of curls and braids, and—shut the door, Dora, please—and I've nigh about concluded to order a wig, and done with it. I think that poison took the color out of my hair, it's certainly getting gray. I might color it, of course, as I've been doing for several years; but it's so thin and harsh. A nice, thick, glossy wig of shiny false hair would be better, and not half the trouble. Only don't tell anybody; for I wouldn't have it get to *Mehitable Green's* ears for a fortune. I pulled hers off once, you remember, and I've no doubt she's waiting for me to get to wearing one, to return the compliment.

You'd like to know what I received in that box that came from Boston, by express, this morning? I've no objections to satisfying your curiosity, Mr. Little, nor that of any of the gentlemen whom I see before me, gathered round the convivial board. That box contained ruches to sew around the flounces of the white tarlatan you saw me making; which accounts for its being so light. Hey? What's that you remarked? A "perverse and wig-ged generation!" You ought to be ashamed of yourself, George, punning upon Scripture—hadn't he, Mr. Bethen? You don't intend to insinuate I'd tell an up and down wrong story about a trifle.

"Trifles, light as hair,
Are, to the jealous, confirmation strong
As proofs of Holy Writ."

Oh, George! clear out with you! You're the greatest pest and bother that ever sat down to a boarding-house table. Dora, if you don't put a stop to his nonsense, I'll have to take him in hand myself. What's that?—

"With all my false, you love me still?"

He! he! Well, a body might as well stop a mill-race as to stop your propensity for quizzing, only I trust the rest of my family will not take your insinuations in earnest. How? There goes *Mehitable Green*, and you must overtake her, and inform her of the arrival of a box of Russias from Boston? If that fellow hasn't actually caught his hat, and run! Do you suppose he really intends to tell her anything, Dora? Only wants to teaze me? He'll be the death of me yet, with some of his practicing jokes.

Have you any objections to my occupying this vacant seat, sir? The cars are so crowded I am impelled to sit by somebody, and I have selected you because I feel certain you are a clergyman—now, have I not guessed aright? Oh, I judge by your white cravat, and your general appearance, sir, but mostly by your countenance; your countenance speaks for itself. I'm a great observer of physiology; I flatter myself I can read a stranger at a glance. The study of the human face divine is my particular fort, and, brief as my experience with mankind has thus far necessarily been, I am seldom mistaken in my judgments. To Newport, for my health, sir. And, as I am impelled to travel without an escort, I have taken the liberty of placing myself under your temporal protection for the period of our mutual journey. I shall not undertake to explain, even to myself, the feelings which prompted me to select you out of all these people. There are meretric mysteries on earth which I seek not to unfold; I simply resign myself to their guidance. Your clerical air, doubtless, had somewhat of an influence; but that was not all, I am certain that was not all.

Married? Not yet; time enough for that yet, sir. I've ever been opposed to early marriages, which has induced me to refuse the offers I have thus far received; though I feel that I am now arriving at an age when it will be safe for me to make a choice. Yet, while not a believer in early marriages, I have ever been a believer in love at first sight. What is

your opinion upon that much-disputed topic, if I may make so free as to inquire? Have you never yet realized the sensation experienced by the poet, when he says, "Oh!—" mercy! how terrified I was! I thought there had been a collusion, certainly, there was such a jolt. Excuse me for the unpremeditated manner in which I threw myself into your protecting arms. I knew not what I was about until I felt your breath fan my cheek, which revived me from my trance of terror. I'm excessively timid; the wild fawn of the forest cannot be more so. I am afraid I have mussed your shirt bosom, sir. I ought never to attempt to travel alone.

What were we conversing about? You are right; it was about love at first sight, and you had not yet given me your opinion. You are a firm believer in it? I knew you was; I could tell it without asking. Is it not curious that I, clinging as I am, have never yet beheld the being in the shape of man to whom I should be willing to yield up my affections?—that is, never until *recently*—indeed, I may say, *quite recently*—within an hour. My retired and thoughtful life has been mostly given to meditation, music, and poetry, and to the dispensation of that fortune which was mine into the channels of benevolence. Like the sensitive plant, I have shrunk from the touch of man. What! do you really get out at the next station? Then we have only met to part. I feel as if this was hardly to be the terminus of our acquaintance, so pleasant, upon my side at least. Ah, thanks! you flatter me. You are sure you are the greatest gainer by our meeting? Perhaps you will not object to an interchange of cards; here is mine, with my address in full. Providence may again throw us together. If you should be in Newport during the next two weeks, I shall have the pleasure of renewing our delightful intercourse. Ah! the cars progress more slowly—they pause. And must you go? I am *much* obliged for the protection you have afforded to a sensitive female. Farewell, till we meet again.

Baggage? Yes, lots of it. S'pose a lady is going to Newport without any baggage? I've six trunks, and all of 'em packed tight. Want my checks, do you? Sure you're the check-man? I'm not to be imposed on, if I am a female; I've been to Boston before. Oh, I've no doubt it's all right. Here they are in my pocket. But great goodness, where's my purse? I've lost it, for it isn't in my pocket, and I felt it there only a little while ago—just before that gentleman left me, at the last station. He must have stolen it; nobody else could have done it,

for it was on the inside, next to him. And he looked so genteel and benevolent! What? A regular swell? Thought I might have known? I didn't—oh, I didn't! I thought he was a clergyman. Fifty dollars gone, out and out! Ha! the greatest gainer by our meeting, indeed? I shouldn't wonder. It's a mercy I didn't have all my money in my pocket; I'd sense enough to put the most of it in my bosom, pinned and sewed to my stays. Fifty dollars, hard-earned cash, and all my susceptibilities thrown away besides! Fifty dollars! That'll cut just so much off my stay at Newport, for I sha'n't spend a cent more than I laid out to. It's too bad! I'll renounce him—I'll renounce him to every police-officer in Boston. I'll leave a full description of his person at headquarters. I'll offer a reward for his reprehension. Yes, I'll give a hundred dollars for the pleasure of confronting him in a court of justice, and being the means of consigning him to the State's prison. I'll make it my first business to go to the telegraph office, and have him telegraphed for. It's a burning and a crying shame when an unprotected female cannot travel upon an American railroad without running the risk of being robbed by genteel-looking men in white cravats. It's bad enough being smashed up pitched down precipices, but to be robbed at every step by the nicest-looking— My watch is gone, too! broke right off from the chain! O dear, I believe I shall turn round and go home, I feel so sick and disheartened! I would not have parted with that watch for a hundred dollars. Here we are in the depot. Policeman! policeman! here! show me to the telegraph office right away, and take my disposition. I've been robbed—shamefully robbed! O dear, if my journey begins in *this* way, I don't know what it'll end in! I only hope the detecting officers will secure that villain.

Describe him? Picture to yourself a wolf in sheep's clothing, going about seeking whom he may devour—a— I must be more identical, must I, in my description? Well, then, a black coat, and a white cravat, and a large diamond on his left finger, and a pious-looking mole on the left of his nose, and a sanctimonious voice, and a meek look of the eyes, and black whiskers, and a ministerial air, about six feet tall, with small feet and a modest smile. Think you know him, do you? Famous gambler and pick-pocket? O my! and to think that I sat beside him, that I confided in him, that I gave him my card! Only to think, me, Miss Slimmens, of Pennyville, giving my card to a gambler and a pick-pocket! Humph!

CHAPTER XVIII.

EPISTOLARY FROM NEWPORT.

DEAR DORA: As I am confined to my apartment by a very unfortunate accident, so also by being too indisposed to go out, I have plenty of time in which to write you, as I promised. This is the eleventh day of my arrival in Newport, and about time for me to be starting for home, for two reasons, one of which is, my means are giving out, owing partly to being robbed, and the other is the accident to which I referred in the beginning. I suppose you are curious to know what kind of a time I have had; and though much of it has equalled my most sanguinary anticipations, there have been a few drawbacks to that unalloyed happiness which is never ours on earth, and which I will confide to you, Dora, on account of your uncommon discretion for a woman, never talking about what'll make other folks trouble—so different from *that* Green and those Pea-Podds, whom I detest, as well as many other Pennyville people. For a mean, gossiping, scandalizing place, I think Pennyville will hold its own with the best. I never bought a little innocent box of pearl-powder, or dropped a remark about a neighbor, that it wasn't scattered to the four winds all over that village.

“One sickly sheep infests the flock,
And poisons all the rest.”

Mehitable Green is that “sickly sheep,” to speak in a meteor—a talking old maid, a pest to the whole community. But what on earth I'm writing about her for, when I've got other topics for my pen, is more than I know. Yes, Dora, I was robbed; before I had even reached Boston, I was robbed of my beautiful watch that I bought the time I expected to marry “A. de M.,” and fifty dollars, good bills, which were in my purse. If you'd see the man that done it, you'd have no more confidence in mortality. I was certain he was a minister of the gospel. He was one of the most respectable-looking persons I ever met; and, although being a stranger, I of course endeavored to keep him at a distance, yet, when he offered me his protection in the cars, I did not feel the least hesitancy in accepting it. We even exchanged cards at his earnest solicitation. But he'll suffer for it! I've the consolation to know that he's safe in jail, and I've got my watch back, too; the money will have to go. He'll have the comfort to find that *some* women cannot be imposed upon with immunity—not only robbing and deceiving them, but taking their cards to keep in the vest-pocket of a gam-

bler and a pick-pocket. I acted with my usual promptitude in immeregencies. I didn't rest till I'd got the police on the track, and telegraphed to New York and other places, and they knew him by the graphical description I gave of him, and he was arrested with my watch, and my name engraved on it, in his possession, so they sent me the watch by express; and I shall be very careful, going home, to keep all my money in my bosom, and not to let anybody, not the bishop himself, or the President, sit on the same seat. It was one of the sweetest moments of my existence when I heard of his arrest. If there's anything I pride myself upon, it's my discrimination, and I hate to be fooled. A person that can wind other people around their finger as easily as I can, don't relish getting tricks played on them, 'specially by sharpers and impositors upon the community. I've made some capital out of that fifty dollars besides, total loss as it was, for it is currently reported in Newport, and especially at the hotel where I am stopping, that I lost a thousand dollars in money and a set of diamonds worth fifteen hundred, besides a draft for a large amount, upon which I have ordered the payment stopped. It has served as a very good subject for a great many persons introducing themselves to me. I had the advantage of appearing upon the stage as a lioness immediately, besides the felicities it afforded for circulating the rumor of my being an heiress. Jest how it got started that I had lost so much, I of course can't say, but I have not contradicted it. The old agate that “a rolling stone gathers no moss” ain't true with regard to stories; they roll up faster than a ball of snow, and I shouldn't wonder if, before I left this place, it was currently reported to be ten thousand dollars and enough jewelry to set up a jewelry store. You know I never was troubled with diffidence, and, being used to doing business for myself, I wasn't a bit embarrassed to arrive here without an escort. I thought it fallacy to take just as good a room as I durst to, which I did. The very evening of my arrival at this house, there was a hop, as they term it, and I made up my mind to attend, if I did have to enter the ball-room hanging, meteorically speaking, upon my own arm. I wore my New w-g—don't let George see this letter—and the curls were beautiful, I used a quarter of a box of Mean-Fun, and spent jest an hour on my eyebrows and cheeks, besides taking a tablespoonful of cologne-water to make my eyes bright. I took out all my dresses, and looked at them over and over.

My choice hung between the white satin and the white flounced mull with the ruches. I finally decided upon the mull. I wore five starched petticoats over a full-sized Douglas & Sherwood, and the flounces set out sweetly. My waist didn't look bigger than a churn-dasher, and was encircled by a blue festus. Your pearl set capped the climax. I am certain I never appeared so well, which imparted an airy gayety to my spirits, and enabled me to enter the ball-room with a fairylike vivacity. I was conscious of becoming the "sinecure of neighboring eyes;" everybody looked at me and whispered, and looked at me again. I overheard some of their commentaries. "She doesn't appear at all depressed by her loss; she must be very wealthy, to bear it with such composure," said one. "Those pearls are quite pretty; I suppose she wears them because all her diamonds were stolen. Did you hear about it?" said another. "Whom can I get to introduce me?" I heard a lovely young gentleman inquiring, in the most agitated manner. "Oh, she's so exclusive she knows nobody, and so independent she goes wherever she's a mind to," was the answer. "I know we should have a game time, if we could only get introduced," said he, again. Jest then he met my eye, and I had a good notion to bow and smile, but concluded I'd better *seem* more reversed at first, even if I didn't feel so. I was jest wishing, with all my heart, that I did know somebody that would ask me to polka, when I saw the ladies hopping and flying around like a parcel of robins learning to use their legs and wings, now on one foot, now on t'other, and then fluttering round and round so delightfully, supported by the elegantest men I ever beheld, with moustaches, and gaiters, and spy-glasses suspended around their necks—I was jest wishing and feeling as if I could not remain in my seat another instance, when—oh, Dora, whom should I behold at the other side of the ball-room but—guess who. You never *could* guess if you should strive for a week. I actually turned faint and thought I should go over, when I realized who it was. Everything got dark, and the music buzzed like a spinning-wheel; but I got over it in a minute, and then my, how mad I was! My blood boiled in my veins! I forgot the heavenly part, everything except that horrid letter; you remember it, Dora—"dear old girl!" Yes, Dora, it was actually Adonis de Mountfort that I saw standing and conversing with the very young gentleman whom I had overheard wishing to be introduced to your humble servant! They had been

looking at me, I know, though Adonis turned his eyes in another direction as quick as he could—but his name isn't Adonis, or De Mountfort either, but Albert D. Morton—and pretty soon he looked back again, and stared right straight at me; and I presume he saw how mad I was, and that I was going to have him arrested for embellishment, false pretences, and breach of promise. I looked him straight in the eyes—oh, Dora, do you remember what beautiful eyes he had?—without flinching, and said to myself, "'Old enough to know better?' Ha, young man, you'll get your pay for *that*, now!" when what should he do but jest take that other gentleman by the arm, and come across the room, and hold out his hand to me with the sweetest smile, and say, as cool as a cucumber, "My friend Miss Slimmens, is it possible this is you? I am *delighted* to meet you here, in this congenial scene. How are you? Not married, I suppose? Never been able to meet a suitable spirit yet, ah, in this etherial world? Allow me to take the liberty of presenting to you my particular friend Mr. Bowser. He was dying to make your acquaintance, and was very much pleased when he learned from me that you and I were *old friends*, my dear Miss Slimmens." I felt as if I should choke with surprise and rage; and I couldn't hardly be mad at him either, he looked so innocent and unconscious, so I just bowed, and was wondering what on earth to do or say—whether to rise up there and cry out "Thief," or to pass it by till to-morrow, which would give him a chance to escape—when he bent over and whispered in my ear: "My *dear* friend, let bygones be bygones! You don't want it understood here that you are a retired milliner, nor just *how* you came to lose seven hundred dollars by me; you've come here to make a match; I'll help you. I know everybody and everything, and all about them. The young gentleman I just introduced to you is a rich young Southerner; all the girls are dying for him. You will be the most envied of your sex. You say nothing, and I'll say nothing, and it'll be just the thing. I can get you a large circle of admirers in less'n two days." Before I could reply, Mr. Bowser was pressing me to dance, and I was standing on the floor before I knew it. He danced splendidly. I enjoyed it excessively, in spite of my rheumatiz, and, after it was over, I was introduced to several others, and, before the evening was ended, I had the gratification of feeling, Dora, that Miss Slimmens, of Pennyville, was the belle of the ball, the observed of all observers. I retired to my

room without a single regret for the robbery, and in such a state of frustration that sleep did not visit my pillow till broad daylight.

The next day, I made more acquaintances. Some of the ladies were very polite, and consoled with me for my loss, which I told them, carelessly, was of no consequence, as my jewelry was not the gifts of friends, except the watch, which I should be glad to get back. I found myself getting along so well, and had already the case of the pickpocket to attend to, I made up my mind it was fallacy to let Mr. Morton (*alias* de Mountfort) go, and not have him arrested for a swindler—at least, for the present; and, on the whole, I'm rather glad I took the course I did. With so many chances thrown right in my face and eyes, as it were, I preferred keeping it a profound secret that I'd ever leached bunnits for a living. You know I always had a remarkably genteel air, which has been in my favor; and the way I've pulled and hauled Susan and Caturah around has been of advantage to me in ordering the waiters, who are killingly attentive, in expectancy of what I'll give 'em, which won't be much, if they only knew it. I go to the table after almost everybody is there, and I never fail to create a sensation. I see it out of one eye, though I don't purtend to. In the early part of the day, I generally pass my time in the reception-rooms; and I always have a book, and generally a gold pencil and a piece of paper with me, and I adopt a pensile air, suitable to a literary person, as well as something peculiar in my dress, as *singularity* is considered a mark of talents. The gentlemen are very fond of conversing with me on intellectual topics. However, as *you* are not literary, Dora, I suppose you don't care to hear. The politest person in the house to me has been Mr. Morton; he treats me with the greatest reverence before everybody, and says and does the nicest things. He's taken me out to ride twice, and we've been down on the beach every day to see the feminine portion of the visitors bathing; but I wouldn't go in the water myself, for reasons—you know, Dora.

Don't think, from what I've said, that I've *forgiven* him; I haven't, and I never shall! I am only acting from fallacy, and so is he, and we understand each other. The acquaintance I think *most* of is quite another person. He's a widower; I should say about thirty-five; rather small, but dresses more sweetly than any other man in Newport; his dress is exceptional, from top to toe, and he handles his spyglass like a person "to the manger born." The ugly imperfection in his appearance is a

slight, a very slight limp, which I suppose is rheumatiz, and which prevents his dancing, which is a great pity. I've understood he has no children, and is worth thirty thousand dollars. I suppose he reckons I'm worth full as much, and I sha'n't take any *particular* pains to undeceive him. He hasn't actually declared himself yet, but I'm expecting every day when he will; at least, as soon as he learns that I am about to leave, which I must do right away, Dora, for it costs even more than I reckoned; what with impudent chambermaids that won't hook up a lady's dress without they get a half a dollar a time for it, and a quarter for a glass of ice-water, and a dollar a day to the hair-dresser, who differs the arrangement of my w-g (burn this, when you get through, if you ever do, which is doubtful), each time, and makes it just like a real head of hair. It takes money, and nothing but a good match can repay my outlay. However, I think the sea air is doing me good, and I trust soon to get over the lingering remains of that exterminator. If he don't declare himself before I leave, I shall invite him to visit Pennyville; though I'd rather the matter would be settled before, as he would see, then, just what I was worth. What would you say, Dora, to my coming home a bride? Poor Timothy Bethuen would scarcely stand the shock. Be prepared for the best; and tell Susan to bake some pound-cake.

But speaking of the hairdresser, and my w-g, and Mr. Morton, and bathing, brings me to the accident which I spoke of in the beginning, and to the most serial misfortune which has befallen me since I left home. Oh, Dora, it makes me sick to think of it. Just when I was getting along so swimmingly. If I'd have stuck to my first resolutions, it never would have occurred. I said you would understand that I had reasons for resisting all inducements to go a bathing in the turf. Of course, you, being acquainted with the little secrets of the feminine toilet, know it would have a very dilatory effect upon paint, false ringlets, etc., to get them wet. I didn't think I should come out of the trial quite as glowingly as the young girls, with red cheeks and plenty of their own hair blowing about, that laughed and frolicked, as independent as fishes, all around. Mr. Morton often solicited me to venture, and I always told him I was too much of a coward. Well, yesterday, we was standing watching the rest, and he said to me, so persuadingly: "Come, my dear Miss Slimmens, *do* try it. There's nothing like it for renewing the blood and making people get fat—good, substantial flesh. Sea-

bathing is famous for fattening folks ; it is the only charm in which you are lacking. Allow me to whisper that I understand something of feminine objections, and that I will insure you against accident. We will venture in but a little ways ; I will support you ; the bloom of your cheeks and the beauty of your curls shall not suffer in the least. I will take care of them. Go, prepare yourself ; you will look charmingly in a Turkish bathing costume." I wanted to try it so much that I allowed myself to be persuaded. I entered one of those shanties, or camps, or whatever they call 'em, and got ready. My mind misgave me as I set foot in the water ; but he assured me so firmly of his protection that I allowed myself to be led on. There was hundreds of people all about us, giggling, and shivering, and frolicking, and some of 'em ducking and letting the turf roll over them as if they were so many fishes. We only went out a little ways, for I wasn't very firm on my feet, and I was afraid one of those big waves would come up too close to us ; but either Mr. Morton is very deceitful, or else the ocean is, for, just as I was standing there looking at the rest, and feeling the pressure of his arm about my waist, and only a little over knee-deep in water, along came a monstrous roller—and the next thing I knew I was gasping, and floundering, and smothering. I thought I was drowning. I never had such a fright but once previously, and that was when I took that arsenic. When I came to my senses a little, Mr. Morton was wiping my face with his handkerchief, and, of course, taking off every speck of artificial there was on it. "I'm very sorry, Miss Slimmens," said he, "that you've got wet. I'd no idea that breaker was so extensive. It almost took me off my feet, and I'm an old bather." But I didn't realize a word he said. I felt a cold sensation about my head ; I put up my hand—oh, Dora, imagine my emotion—my w-g was gone. At the instance I made the discovery, the turf came rolling back again, and there, upon its foaming crest, floated my beautiful, my beloved, my expensive w-g. "Save it!" I shrieked. Adonis made a lurch for it—but it was too late ; it was gone—forever ! Doubtless at this moment it is wildly tossing upon the cruel Atlantic, saturated with brine, its glossy ringlets torn into a million separate hairs, while I sit here writing to you and deploring its loss. That isn't the worst of it, either. I looked about—horror of horrors !—every one was looking at us and laughing, even the children. I know that I must be a ridiculous figure. "Take me out ;

get me back into the camps, quick !" I exclaimed, and Adonis—it's second nature to call him by that name—assisted me ashore, looking as grave as a judge. I dressed as quick as I could ; but when I came to tie that charming hat, so becoming to my long curls, upon my head, I felt that my glory was departed. Yet I was impelled to go to my hotel, and enter it in broad daylight in the face and eyes of a hundred staring men. If ever I realized the worth of a veil, it was then. I would have given all the money in my trunk for a yard of brown *barège*, but I had nothing of the kind along with me. The fright, and the embarrassment, and everything, has made me fairly sick ; besides, I can't stir from my room until my hairdresser has completed another, which he is doing as fast as he can. Several ladies have knocked at my door, to inquire after my health, but I have not admitted a soul. My only consolation under this afflicting dispensation is that my admirer, Mr. Hopkins, the widower, was not among the spectators—at least, I do not think he was. He was not on the beach, and from the hurried glance I cast at the windows and piazzas, as I entered our hotel, I concluded he was taking his noon nap. I trust I shall be myself again by to-morrow, and that something decisive will then take place. I must leave here by the day after, as my funds will be exhausted by that period. So you may expect me to follow my letter up pretty close. If it should be a Mrs. Hopkins, instead of a Miss Slimmens, you are called upon to welcome, do not be surprised ; curiouser things have happened. Pull Caturah's hair if she don't mind you. Tell Mr. Bethuen I'm convinced there's a great deal of sin and wickedness at watering-places. And be sure that Susan bakes that cake, and frosts it. Don't let George see this letter. For a brief space yet, your affectionate friend,

ALVIRA SLIMMENS.

P. S. Don't tell Mr. Bethuen about my dancing the polka ; it's scarcely consistent with my position as a professor, and I suppose I hadn't ought to ; but the temptation was irresistible, and if the folks at home don't get to talking and scandalizing about it, there'll be no great harm done. I'm going to repent of it as soon as I get married, and settled down, and get things off my mind a little, so's I can have an opportunity to compose my reflections. I intended to be sorry for it when I done it, as soon as I had a good chance.

P. P. S. I hope Caturah hasn't got into them purserves on the top shelf of the pantry. Keep an eye on her, please.

A DAY'S TEMPTATIONS.

BY MARIAN GWYNN.

"How tired I am, and how hot and dusty it is! The very thought of that long walk blinds and chokes me. Wealth must be as doubtful a blessing as poverty is a sure misfortune, when it generates such carelessness and neglect."

There was nothing of the heroine of romance about Margaret Ross. She had closed the dark green blind of the narrow window to shut out the intensely sultry glow of a hot July day, reflected from the brick walls and shining roofs of the opposite row of houses, and the inharmonious sounds of a dispute between a newsboy and the baker's errand girl, then in progress at a corner hydrant, and each moment threatening to be brought to the more forcible argument of blows. She did not even bestow a second glance on the gilded cages and singing birds of the humble aviary, and the thrifty geraniums and roses which a poor German, keeping fresh the memories of home and the green places of his heart, persuaded to exist on the sultry sunshine drifting over the upright shadeless walls into his window. She did not look a second time, although for two years those humble friends, that made his little world of wealth and affection in the homes and land of his adoption, had been the only things to which she turned with pleasure in the crowded street where she lived.

She had laid off her street bonnet of plain dark straw, exposing an abundant wealth of beautiful brown hair, braided carefully in heavy curls at the back of her small erect head, and the gray, unobserved duster had dropped from the gracefully sloping shoulders to the floor, displaying the perfect curve of the bust and the slender rounded waist to advantage, even in the uncertain light a single pencil of sunshine falling through the closed blind made in the darkened room.

These were her principal, her only points of beauty. There was nothing to attract a stranger's second look in the pale cheeks, firm mouth, and serious dark eyes; and, altogether, nature, at least as far as appearances might speak, had fitted Margaret Ross for the path which she was to walk in life—a third class music-teacher in a great city. There was no danger of marriageable sons, or eligible nephews, or cousins, or gentleman visitors in general, falling in love with that plain, business face, when Miss Ross called in the morning to hear Miss Juliet practise

the scale of B flat, or help Miss Ellen through the difficulties of "Von Weber's last Waltz." No pursuit of knowledge under difficulties to ascertain who owned that deep, full, incomparable voice that always startled a stranger visiting the quiet church where she sang, after a full view had been obtained of that matter-of-fact, every-day-life face.

The very room in which she sat seemed to have taken, with that peculiar property which our surroundings possess of portraying our characters, the expression of her face on its physiognomy—for rooms have countenances as naturally, and as expressive as persons. From the dark striped, well-preserved carpet it had been her care to keep from the fading influences of the light and heat since childhood, the landscape of palm-trees on the window blinds, and the lounge with its dove-colored cushions, to the open piano which, as they say of decayed gentility, looked as if it had seen better days, and a picture of Robert Burns, and a Scotch heather that hung above it—all spoke of utility, and the possession of that better part of elegance—neatness.

There was in the whole experience of her past life but one point on which to hang one romantic thought. She was the oldest daughter of a poor printer, who had married a pretty sewing-girl in the heyday of a romantic passion, laboring probably under some hallucination concerning love in an attic, where sentiment and sunshine were to supply the joys bestowed by budding boughs and new-made hay under similar circumstances in the country. Of sunshine there was certainly no lack in the close, unhealthy city court where their children sickened of annual fevers for the want of pure fresh air; but the years were marked by a gradual and total dying out of sentiment, succeeded by an unlovely anxiety concerning butcher's and baker's bills, and rent days, while the pretty wife, fretted and faded out of all her loveliness, degenerated into a complaining, *ill-used* woman.

This was the intellectual and physical atmosphere in which Margaret Ross's mind grew into its sober, ungirlish cast, and her cheek took its hue of habitual pallor. She had lived through a long, unlovely childhood, during which her characterless mother had shifted the responsibilities of her young brothers and sisters on her

shoulders, at a period when their mental and bodily wants seemed to take the cry of growing nature—"more, more." The whole infant progeny, from the earliest date of her recollection, seemed to have possessed an inherited predisposition for all those evils human flesh is heir to, in the shape of whooping-cough, measles, and scarlet fever, not to mention a principle of predestination which seemed to mark them for the ownership of cut fingers, bruised noses, blackened eyes, and the worst of every street fight or an attempt at unusual locomotion on the side-walk.

It was out of these evils the one romance of her life grew. A poor German music-teacher was attracted by the sound of her truly remarkable voice, swelling through the measured notes of some old time ballad to still the fretful wailing of a sick child. It was no remarkable occurrence that he should be there in that lifeless part of the great town, that beat strongly through all its great pulses of human life with the fever heats of ambition and love of gain. He was a dreamer, who had left his native land haunted by visions of fame and applause that were to enrich and complete his life in the vigorous new world. He may have learned that his hopes and dreams were vain, before the voice of the lonesome, weary-hearted child struck the chords of sympathy in his heart, and it might have been the impulse of *ennui* that first induced him to call her from her humble seat on the curbstone, where she listened to his voice through all the grand pieces of the old masters of his native land in the long dusky twilight, sometimes faintly essaying to imitate the rich rises and swells of sounds. It was the reawakening of his old dreams, when he first learned the depth and strength of her voice, and the beginning of a new life to her when she learned to steal breathless up the long flights of steps to his room, devoting the few hours stolen from her weary duties to the eager study of her *Art*.

It would be romantic folly to say she learned by inspiration, and that there were no disheartening hours spent over the weary routine of scales and octaves, when her enthusiastic teacher grew impatient and upbraided her with failure and the breaking of his heart. But, although she only half fulfilled his *ideal*, and lacked that devotion to her art and forgetfulness of the rest of the world, which he thought it deserved, she possessed an energy and strength of perseverance which alone would overcome difficulties and ultimately win her success. He never inspired her with his own hopes and aspirations; but when, after four years' constant effort to make

out of her voice a thing which would make his fortune and enrapture the world, he wearied of the task, and, sickened and disgusted with the unappreciative bustle of the busy Western world, he sailed for his native land, he took a blessing from the heart of the quiet girl, and left the only one that had yet brightened her life behind. And there the romance ended.

It would have afforded the poor, unstable enthusiast little satisfaction to know that his pupil had ceased to look on his gift to her as a Heaven-sent inspiration, and learned to regard it as a means by which she might gain bread and bring comfort to a sullen, unhappy home. More than ever the heavy responsibilities of their uncongenial life fell on her heart and mind through the long sickness preceding the death of her father, an event for which he had waited with the bitter impatience which a life of suffering, misinterpreted and misapplied, had brought to be a part of his nature. Through the years that followed, there had been a sickening and dying out of the vital energies of her life. There had been but few changes: a removal to a more quiet street, and a few accessions to household comforts, admissible by her limited income, the expanding of her heart to that growth her mind had long since prematurely attained, and the formation of an affection which was at the same time the blessing and bitterness of her life.

The enthusiasm which at first rendered her every-day duties pleasant, bringing vague dreams of great concert-rooms, and the dim aisles of churches over the seas, filled with incense, and the shuddering sounds of organ music, died out, leaving the discordant sounds of a mispractised scale in "Hunten's Instruction Book" as the unlovely realities of her bright ideals.

So it came that the long dusty walk in summer through the blinding heats of July and August, and the bleak exposure to the autumn and winter rains came to be dreaded only less than her return home, rendered miserable by the fretful complainings of her mother, and the noisy and boisterous enjoyment of her young brothers, who were in the habit of making the "best" of their few hours' freedom from the restraint of the school-room, and, as the street was a forbidden pleasure, usually made the family sitting-room the scene of their efforts and success.

This morning, Margaret Ross, after her long hot walk to a remote part of the city, where her principal patroness and employer, Mrs. Graham, lived, sat down in her quiet room with a bitter swelling of the spirit. She had passed

careless, happy faces in her walk, faces no younger in years than hers, bearing no impress of life's heavy responsibilities and cares. She had listened to the voice of Ellen Graham, an older sister of her young pupils, through a long list of expected visits and pleasures which was to be the programme of *her* life through the summer, with which she was entertaining some fashionable friends in the parlor, as she had waited a full hour in the hall to have her bill receipted and sent down to her.

"She would have been at Newport long ago," the pretty voice said, "but ma had waited for Cousin Arthur to come and accompany them. He had been South recently, and was just from *la belle* Paris. Yes, he had been there three years. His elder brother was a gentleman belonging to the French Legation; and Lucy should just see the wardrobe his wife (that is, the elder brother's wife) had brought home with her—actual Valenciennes and real diamonds." And Margaret had stopped her ears to hear no more. It was well she had shut the door to keep out as much as possible of the merriment of her brothers, who were executing their Saturday's performance of "turning the house upside down," besides some special excitement incident on equestrian performances on the clothes-horse in the back entry.

There was a mistake of twenty-five dollars in the sum of her bills, consequent on the bustle of Mrs. Graham's mind over her preparation for her departure to a watering-place. The long street was to be walked over again, although her head ached with the distracting shouts of the newsboys, and the heat and bustle of the sunny outdoor world. The sum was small to the wife of the wealthy merchant, who economized when she settled, but never when she made bills. It would probably pay the confectioner for refreshments some evening when she entertained a few particular friends. How many blessings it would purchase Margaret! The school bills that were to be settled by the still unearned proceeds of the next quarter might be paid at once, and the haunting anxiety of poverty quieted for a while by this trifle which the rich owner would never miss from her purse. But the cheek of the girl grew hot with the shame of the temptation as she put these thoughts away from her mind.

The bonnet was resumed with a long, steady gaze into the small mirror as the slender fingers adjusted the ribbons under the firm, rounded chin. There was a settling down of the lines around the serious mouth as she stepped out into the sunshine.

She had never known a day's recreation in her life; the very Sabbaths, when she sat in the church with folded hands and devotional eyes, had been haunted by anxious cares for the coming week. The same life of hopeless, loveless toil lay behind and before her.

"It is of no use," she murmured, bitterly, "to hope for brighter things; as I have lived, I will live until I die, and it is not just that I should bind another's life down to mine. He may learn to love some one else, and be happy years before any change may reach me. I must tell him he is free; that I never could come to his home as a blessing, and that I love him too well to burden his life with the cares of mine. It is worse than death, this slow wearing out of soul and body with years of waiting, in mockery of a hope never to be realized. Can it be that Heaven is just, when there are those who spend thoughtlessly twice the sum that would make my life complete and happy? What more has Ellen Graham done for the good of heaven or earth, who walks the world saved from all temptation, and whose life is one long holiday of pleasure, than I, who am denied the very affections of life? No, it is not just!"

The long walk had entered into a crowded, fashionable street, and the quiet teacher with her roll of music was but a single figure in the great tide of human life. Mrs. Graham was engaged; but Margaret's note, with the inclosed sum of twenty-five dollars, was delivered to the servant, and she turned from the temptation of actual sin safe, but with a heart filled with bitter repinings to meet the duties of the day.

"How horribly hot it is! Mary, draw the curtain. Pshaw! do not let in the light that way. I declare, the heat is stifling. You may put more ice in the pitcher before you go. You need not take Miss Ross's note up to ma; I will attend to that. Some worry about bills, I suppose; she was here two or three hours this morning, and I presume ma did not pay her, and this is a dun. Shut the door, and be sure not to let Robert or Emma in; they are so noisy!" And Ellen Graham, the beauty and belle, readjusted the sofa cushion under her dainty little head with a just appreciation of her comforts, knowing that a stifling July heat glowed on the pavements without, and that the mercury of her mother's mental temperature was at fever-heat over packing-boxes and trunks, that were the indispensable accompaniments of Monday's exodus.

"It will be so pleasant to have Arthur along"—and the head was turned a little, that the soliloquizer might obtain a full view of the lovely face in the opposite mirror. "It makes an impression to have a gentleman who has been presented to Eugenie in one's party. I am so worried about my bracelets!"—and the voice took the tones of real vexation. "To think the difference is only *twenty-five dollars*, and ma will not gratify me, when the turquoise would suit my new grenadine so well. I am tired to death with this eternal complaining about expenses and making both ends meet, as if it made much difference whether they did or not. I would not marry a man to save his life, if I thought there would be such a fret pnt on my temper—there!" The dainty fingers had emphasized the last assertion with such a vigorous twist on the note she held, that it opened, and the returned bills fell rustling to the floor.

She started up with a little cry of exultation, this woman who had never a want, *who walked the world saved from temptation*. The note she had been twisting around her pretty fingers was read now with a face of interest. "What a marvel of honesty this person who gave Emma and Juliet music lessons was, be sure!" And the delicate cheeks crimsoned to the shadow of the waving hair with the shame of the contrast. "But there certainly was a difference in the cases," she argued; "this Margaret Ross, as she wrote her name in free, full characters, had no right to this money." It was but a little sum, the difference between the coveted bracelet and the one she almost hated now by contrast. Already she saw it gleam on her white, rounded arm, as she stood in the moonlight, it might be on the piazza at "Ocean Hall," with a pair of pleasant dark eyes bent on her face (alas that love should stoop to conquer thus!) with the admiration almost amounting to love which she had so often discovered in their gaze.

The grasp of the slender fingers tightened as the paper was torn slowly to pieces, and the pretty features settled into a serious study—it might be over the great puzzle of right and wrong. Not entirely or half satisfied, you might see by the hot flushing of the smooth forehead as the door opened.

"Are you here, Nell? How pleasant it is! I am sure it is a decided piece of folly to drag a fellow off to Newport when it is so comfortable at home, even if he does happen to be a handsome dog, and you wish to exhibit him—eh, coz?"

"Now, Arthur, be quiet, or I will drive you out."

"Oh, do be amiable, Ellen. I have encountered a regular domestic storm, or rather I experienced all the inconvenience of the thunder and lightning without being actually exposed to the elementary influences; for I was in the library while your mamma blew the household up in the dining-room. To give you a full statement, for I heard, although I put my fingers in my ears, it seems Aunt Lucy settled some bills this morning, the family purse coming out minus twenty-five dollars thereby. Natural inference is that it enriched the pocket of the opposite party, the said persons being Miss Ross and Catherine, the cook; the latter makes delightful blanc-mange and French soups, and therefore is not to be suspected for a moment; and the lamented but inevitable consequence is Miss Ross's dismissal. By the way, what a fine-looking person she is! I saw her in the hall this morning. She has a figure Juno might envy. She had dropped her shawl. She does not look like a dishonest person, does she?"

"Does what? I have not heard a word you have said for the last ten minutes." And the eyes were raised from a minute survey of the pattern of Brussels carpet or the toe of her tiny slipper, or both, to the speaker's face.

"I will not have to go over it all, will I?" with a ludicrous affectation of dismay. "I believe the sum total of my remark was that Miss Ross did not look like a dishonest person."

Miss Ellen Graham was not a reader of countenances—at least, she had never noticed Miss Ross's face. She thought her quite a plain-looking person.

Her cousin noticed the unamiable tone, the level gaze of the blue eyes, and the flush of the cheeks, extending even to the white throat; and naturally thought he was particularly unfortunate in vexing Nell while all the fellows were out of town, and he would have to bear the brunt of her ill humor till he brought her around again.

"Only a short walk, Margaret."

She had slackened her pace when she heard his quick step following her down the quiet street on which she had just entered. It was at the close of that sultry, tiresome day, marked out from the rest of her life to be remembered only for more hopeless repining and bitter thoughts than usual. She did not speak for many minutes after he had drawn her arm in his, as his blessed privilege of protection, and accommodated his quick step to her slower movements.

He had been afraid he would not see her, he said. He had been detained later than usual in the store. Miss Ellen Graham had come in quite late to purchase a bracelet. How beautiful she was! Was Margaret ill or troubled? she was so quiet.

She was wondering whether, in spite of the morning's resolutions, she could give him up, and take the realities of her life again contented and happy, believing all for the best. The whole experience of the day had been unpleasant, having been marked by an unusually large number of discordant scales and false notes on the part of her pupils, and an unusual impatience of spirit and irritability of temper on her side; either fact with equal probability might be supposed to be the cause or consequence of the other.

The freshened wind blew coolly on her forehead, and it was pleasant to know there was some one in the whole world on whom she could rest after the labors and trials of the day. "It was weak, yet womanly," she murmured to herself; "yet was it just to him?" The momentary irresolution was put aside, and she told of her morning's thoughts and temptations. "It was not right," she said, stifling the quick

throb of the heart that recoiled from the very thought of life unshared by him, "that she should be a burden on his fresh young energies. She was not free to love and wed whom she chose. It was wise and right, for Heaven had willed it so, and she must and would accept her destiny without a murmur. The path she must tread was pointed out to her; but he might choose his own, might take a smoother path, and lead a brighter life."

Could Heaven have given her a sweeter blessing than his words: "Your path is mine, and you are my life, Margaret?" The walk was extended far through the dusky street, and the parting gaze of the eyes that at last, from her doorstep, watched his retreating figure through the shadows, was an unspoken blessing. Unusually deep and fervent was the utterance that the prayer of her childhood, "Lead us not into temptation," found on her lips that night. Lead us not into the temptation of envy and despondency, and deliver us from the evils of bitter thoughts and repinings. More equally divided than we, in our short seeing dream, are the temptations of life; and who shall say one to the other: "You should not murmur; lo, your cross is light!"

A PLAIN CHRISTMAS STORY.

FROM A MINISTER'S WIFE.

BY ALICE B. HAVEN.

How well I remember the excitement of the evening when my husband returned from the Annual Conference, and told me that he had been transferred to this large and important church!

We had been living in an obscure country village, not very far off, it is true, but among an agricultural people, on the one hand, very plain, very uncultivated; and, in our village, the ignorance, and hardness, and low vice that always prevail near a manufactory where the workmen are almost all directly from the old country. The church was poor, and the salary small—four hundred a year, with the parsonage, and that was a plain one story and a half wooden house, where my husband's only study was a sleeping-room, little better than a garret chamber, with the children's bed in one corner. We always call Clark and Wesley "the children," though there were our three babies then; but they were all gathered in our own chamber. The kitchen opened from the little parlor, and in the kitchen we ate, because we were liable to interruption at any time, and visitors could not be shown up the crooked stairs to the attic study.

It made little difference to me how the parlor was occupied, for I scarcely ever sat down through the day, unless I was putting a child to sleep. A dollar a week was one-eighth of our little income, and could not be afforded for a woman-servant, and of course the half-grown girl could not manage washing, or ironing, or even a single meal, unless it were tea, without my assistance.

I hardly know how we did manage; but the children wore check aprons and patched trousers, and a dried apple pie was a treat. I have dreaded to see a neighboring "brother" come in to tea many a time, because the piece of butter on the table was so small and there was no more in the house, or nothing to replenish the bread-plate with, for the flour was out, and I had not the courage to tell John of it, for such news always made a gloomy meal to me.

However, that was all over—for two years, at least! The sermons studied in that little attic chamber had been heard of far beyond our circle, and the diligent spirit that was faithful over a few things had been called to "come up

higher." I shed tears of joy and thankfulness that night; I had not been so happy since Maria engaged her first five scholars.

There are some women who seem to me as if they had ceased to belong to their own families from the moment they marry. They are either absorbed in their new connections or in their husband and children; all their cares, and anxieties, and sympathies run in these new channels: but I am not one of them. I do not believe any one ever went into a husband's family with clearer ideas of new duty among them than I did when I went into John's. I have worked for them, and sought opportunities for relieving them in trouble; I have sympathized with them, and prayed for them; but they never have taken the place of those who belonged to me before I had ever seen him.

Sarah's quick spirit accused me of it; but she lived, poor girl to find that, though her taunts hurt and wounded me, they did not change my course among John's family or alienate me from her in the least. She had never been a wife, and could not understand how sacredly I accepted every duty the change of relation brought. After her death, when only mother and Maria remained, my heart went out to them more and more. I was a mother then myself, and began to realize the early struggles to rear and educate us which my mother passed through, and to grieve that her old age should have any care. As for Maria, when Sarah was no longer there to assist, the burden all came upon her, and my longing to help her has been at times positive anguish; to feel myself so helpless, tied hand and foot by my own cares, and not able to lighten their burden by a feather's weight! There is one thing—I believe this intense but ungratified desire has helped me to bear my own, by drawing my thoughts away from it; and perhaps this is one reason why we are charged to cherish sympathy as a Christian duty, to "rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that weep." So, when Maria's little school was fairly established, I had been so eager about it that it was like a great, good fortune happening to ourselves, and now our turn had come.

A rich church, a handsome parsonage, and

seven hundred a year!—nearly twice as much as we *had* lived on, and managed to keep out of debt. It was a fortune to us in prospect, and I felt as if all the petty, wearying cares of my life were at an end. I threw my arms around John's neck, and laid my head on his breast, and cried, as I have said. Sleep seemed impossible that night, so many vague plans and calculations crowded my brain. Mother should have the warm blanket shawl I had been longing to give her, and Wesley a new Sunday suit made out of his father's second-best, and John shine in the glory of new broadcloth, with seams that did not require a weekly sponging with alcohol to keep them at all respectable!

A full-grown girl could be afforded now—in fact, our changed position would require it. Alas! that is the secret of all the troubles that came upon us. It was another matter to do the work of the family in this house, with a regular study, and parlor, and sitting-room, and broad hall and staircase to be kept in order, and liable to visits, that were not meant to be intrusions, at any hour of the day.

When we lived at Factoryville, if good old sister Miller dropped in with a few fresh eggs or a basket of sweet apples, she always came where I was, and I could go on with mixing my bread or patching a jacket, and talk at the same time; but how could I ask ladies who never see the interior of their own kitchen more than once a day, to sit down in mine, or how could I take Mrs. Strong where I had not asked Mrs. Steele, when she was so jealous of "the rich members of the church," although her constant cry was "Christian simplicity?"

Everything had to be different here; no more going out to tea at three o'clock in the afternoon, and taking my work and children with me, coming home in time to put them to bed, and have a good long evening with my needle, and maybe John running out of his study to read to me for half an hour, if there was no evening meeting; and then, having mother and Maria so near us, I could save from the little household stores the kind farmers' wives brought in a few apples, a peck of potatoes, meal, and milk for them; a great help to such a small household.

We had been here nine months, and in all that time not so much as a loaf of bread had been sent in. Hothouse flowers, and grapes from Mrs. Steele and Mrs. Lovett, more than once; but they did not replenish wasting "meal and oil," or help me in saving towards that shawl which my mother's stiffened limbs required. So far from saving, we were for the first time in

all our lives in *debt*! I hate the words! O how the miserable fact hung over me! but it would not do for the minister's wife to go to church all winter in a straw bonnet with dyed ribbons, and sit in the very front pew to be criticized by all the congregation. How I grudged the five dollars a corded silk one cost me, and the set of muslins that this constant going out to tea—which means a party of from ten to eighteen people arrayed in their best—demanded, to keep my five years old black silk in countenance.

Then I could not be as much in the kitchen, and groceries did not go more than half as far, or meat either, and I missed the sparrows and outs of fresh beef or veal that were brought us when any of our people were killing stock. I used to weary of their lack of cultivation, at the dulness of their lives and minds, and long for educated, congenial society; that was one of the great charms this change seemed to promise us—that John would be more appreciated, and I should have friends I could really enjoy; but in all this church there is not one who enters into a single joy or care of my life.

When Maria's school was certain, I had to fly round to Mrs. Miller, and tell her all about it; and she knew how heavily the doctor's bill weighed on my mind, for fear we should not be able to meet it, and the expenses of John's illness last year. It was even better in Center-ville, though we were poor enough there; but I knew that was the beginning, and we had everything to look forward to, and I was young and strong; and Sarah was here to work for mother and help Maria.

Poor Maria, with her feeble health! and now, this last quarter, there has been another school set up, and she has lost some of her best scholars, and they are in a great deal of trouble!

I have known it all along! I felt it from October, when she only mentioned that the new school had commenced; her letters have been less and less cheerful, though she never complained, or asked for anything, or hinted that mother had a right to expect some help from me, till December came. I know how I must seem to them, utterly selfish; for, feeling so powerless, I have avoided the subject, as if I was indeed guilty, and poor Maria did not upbraid me then; she only said:—

"I have not made as much by thirty dollars as I did last year, and it has cost us rather more to live, missing your kind help, though you know that nobody can manage better than mother, and indeed we have often not bought any meat for weeks together, and managed to do without butter since it began to be so dear,

and mother has not been to church since the cold weather came, for you know I wrote you how unfortunate it was about the moths getting into her cloak. Sometimes I hardly know how we shall get through the winter. I dread to go to the store for anything, for fear they will refuse to trust me any longer, for you know it is sometimes two and three months before people pay up school bills."

Yes, I know from sad experience that school bills and a minister's salary are the last debts people ever pay, and even then both are grudged, while the value of physical service is recognized and discharged at once.

Woolhouse grapes, and my mother and delicate sister starving themselves! I gave my portion to the children, and John wondered that I did not enjoy them. I could not trouble him with the letter, but I brooded over it all the more; it was a shadow that never left me. How could I help them? what could I give up? what spare? what sell? Alas, nothing! My ingenuity was already exhausted in economies, and every dollar that could be saved must go towards our own debts; how much they were we did not ask each other, it was a subject avoided by mutual consent. I envied the seamstress stitching away in Mrs. Steele's sitting-room; she toiled hard, but she earned something, and had the comfort of ministering to her lame sister. I worked harder, for my long vigils began when her day's work was ended, and for all that my sewing was never overtaken.

A minister must always be well dressed, you know; it is expected of him that he should ever be seen in the broadcloth which many a man in his church of twice his means does not feel able to afford for daily wear. Then his linen must be spotless, and in the midst of other things John's shirts gave out all at once, and I had to leave the children's clothes and go to work on them. I never set about any task with a heavier heart; we had not the money by us to pay for the muslin, and that must be added to our account at the store; it was only putting off the evil day, for the bills were sure to come in at Christmas. The shop-keeper was very polite, and anxious to please me; but I felt like a thief when I saw him out off his goods and do up the parcel, and I told John so when I came home.

It was hard for him, too; but he tried to cheer and encourage me. Many a man, at finding himself involved where he had every reason to expect that his cares had been lightened, would have thrown the blame on his wife's bad management, and indeed it *does* seem like

it; but God knows I have tried to do my best. When I said so to John last night, and that I wished I was back again at Factoryville, he answered—"We did not send ourselves here; it was God's own appointment, and not our seeking; we have no responsibility but to do the best we can, and I believe we shall be carried through somehow." So he took up his Bible, and read aloud—"Trust in the Lord, and be doing good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

But I didn't see *how*, and besides my own case there was that letter, which I had not the heart to trouble him with. I know it seems as if people ought to live comfortably on seven hundred dollars and no house rent to pay, and I have seen the time when I should have blamed anybody that did not do it. But try it, with the expenses that grow out of keeping up a respectable appearance in a rich church, where you are not only expected to go to tea parties, but to give them, and are liable to have a presiding elder, or a city minister, or some one else who looks not only for Christian hospitality—which is such things as we have, and a willing mind, as I apprehend it—but such things as we never should have thought of having but to entertain them and the brethren who drop in to see them!

Then, as I said before, one cannot march a family up the main aisle into the front pew with the consciousness that they are shabbier than the children of the man who makes their shoes and sits very near the door. I kept Wesley home for three Sundays, until I could finish his new jacket, and Mrs. Strong and Mrs. Wise came to see me about it, and said it was setting a bad example, when the minister's children were not in their places!

I felt really bitter towards John, that he could go so quietly to bed after our talk, feeling so peaceful, when I staid up and ironed out the cloth which Bridget had shrunk, so as to have it out out as soon as the work was done in the morning. I could have done it earlier in the evening but for going to Thursday night prayer-meeting; but that was "expected" of me too, and the mothers' meeting on Friday afternoon, and the Female Berean Circle, and the Wednesday evening lecture. It would have been a "bad example" if I had staid at home and made my husband's shirts!

I tried to get at them the first thing in the morning, and was doing pretty well when Mrs. Steele called. I heard the carriage stop at the door in dismay, for I knew I must leave everything, baby and all, and go into the parlor. I

hurried up stairs as softly as I could, for the baby had pulled my hair out of order and rumpled my collar, and forgot to take a shawl into the parlor, though there was no fire there. Mrs. Steele's velvet cloak and rich furs kept her warm! I think, sometimes, that if we stood more on an equality I should really love Mrs. Steele; she has such lovely eyes, and a low, sweet voice, and such a gentle way. Her manner was so friendly that an insane idea of telling her all my troubles rushed into my mind. She always reminds me of Maria—of what Maria would be if she was in her position—and I felt as if she could understand my wretchedness. To think that Maria, with so much refinement and natural elegance, shrank before a potty grocer, because he had trusted her with ten dollars!

But I recollected myself in time. This favorite of fortune, whose furs alone had cost as much as Maria's whole year's earnings, could have no comprehension of any such distress; besides, might she not think it was a covert appeal for assistance? So my pride sealed my lips.

She had come to ask us for tea that evening. "Only a few friends, and she would send the carriage early."

A minister's wife has not the common refuge of an apology; it is expected of her always to accept an invitation thankfully, and be only too glad to go. I thought of the baby screaming himself to sleep because I was not there to undress him; that Bridget would most likely have a visitor drop in, or drop out herself, leaving the house and children to their fate; of the shirts huddled together and left for another day; of the afternoon prayer-meeting, which I was expected to open; and that by six o'clock I should be tired, and fagged, and more out of heart than ever—yet I said that I would come.

The door-bell rang as Mrs. Steele rose to go, and we met Mrs. Strong in the hall. It would not do to ask her into the sitting-room when her rich neighbor had evidently been entertained in the parlor. Mrs. Strong was "as good as anybody," to use her own frequent declaration; she would sit there and shiver first! Between them I lost my morning, and by the time I could help Bridget with the dinner things, and settle the children for the afternoon, and get dressed, it was time for the prayer-meeting.

I was thankful it was only my part to read; I could not have prayed without mockery; I felt that I was committing sin to kneel down

with the rest, and appear to listen. My mind was so full of my troubles, and, above all, of those who were dearer to me than myself. Was God a God of truth and love when my mother's old age seemed so forsaken? she who had served Him so faithfully, who delighted so in "the courts of the house of the Lord," deprived of her one great comfort for lack of a garment to shield her from the storms of winter? I looked around when they were singing a hymn. I counted six thread lace veils, either of which would have bought my mother a shawl; besides Mrs. Steele's, there were as many more expensive velvet cloaks in the little circle, and furs, and French walking boots, and rich silk dresses. Did they serve God better than the humble, prayerful woman who was denied the necessities of life? What a hypocrite I felt to be sitting there with such a grave, decorous face when my thoughts were like these!

It required all the force I could put upon myself to go out that evening. I had not the slightest interest in any one or in anything. When I stepped into the luxurious carriage Mrs. Steele sent for us, I thought of Maria walking to her school-room twice a day, in cold, and sleet, and drenching rains; its ease was torture to me, for her sake. We entered a hall as broad as the parlor of the parsonage, brilliantly lighted, and up a staircase so easy that the ascent was scarcely felt. The rich carpeting was soft and warm to the tread; the carved furniture of the chamber to which I was shown was so polished that it reflected light instead of absorbing it; and the drawing-room always bewildered me with the variety and elegance of its appointments.

I had worn my black silk on every visit I had paid since my brown lawn became too thin for the season, for my new mousseline de laine was part cotton; and, besides, no one among Mrs. Steele's friends wore anything but a silk on these occasions. They dropped in one by one till the room was comfortably full; full of flounces, and lace collars and sleeves, and more than one diamond brooch flashed in the gas-light; a great change since our church first stood up against "putting on of apparel." Then we were ushered into tea, the long table, shining with silver, and glass, and china, covered with the finest damask, and filled by every delicacy of the season. There was game, and salads, and delicately arranged dishes of ham, and tongue, and cold chicken; crisp, delicious colery rising from its out glass vase; jellies quivering from their tasteful moulds, and rich cake heaped in silver baskets.

I set down my porcelain cup, with the fragrant aroma of Mocha coffee, colored by the golden cream; I could not drink it, I could only seem to eat the costly viands with which my plate was loaded. "We often have not bought meat for weeks together, nor tasted butter since it became so high," rang in my ears. The glittering scene, the hum of pleasant conversation died away from before me; I saw the dull room, the poor fire, the scanty table they were enduring! and when Mrs. Steele said, "You are not well, I am afraid; you do not seem to eat," I forced myself to taste what my soul loathed, and to smile when it seemed as if my heart was breaking.

I was bitter enough before I came upon the knot of ladies in the library, an hour or so after tea. I had been loitering by myself through the rooms, escaped for a little while from playing a part I could ill sustain, and envy and jealousy for the first time in all my life assailed me. But it was my own doing; I had broken down the defences of my life by indulging in murmurs and distrust, and the Adversary is not slow to take advantage of every departure from our only safety and defence. Yes, I looked at the rich hangings, and costly pictures, and heavy furniture. "All this and heaven too!" I repeated to myself, bitterly. "No wonder that people forget the wants of others, when they have not one left to be gratified! They dole as out a pittance, and it is no fault of theirs if it does not meet our wants!"

I came suddenly upon the group in the library; the draperies of the arch and the soft velvet carpet concealed my approach. They were speaking loudly, too; discussing some matter with eagerness, and I heard some one say: "It does not look very well for a minister's wife in a congregation like this to dress poorly."

"O Mrs. Lovett!" Mrs. Steele began, and then some one cried "Hush!"—looking up and feeling me between the curtains.

They wished to spare my feelings, but it was too late. Angry, vehement words rose to my lips; I burned to defend myself, when I knew that not one of them was denied a coveted object, and their lives passed in a dream of ease while I toiled! But I did not; I would have gone away, but they had seen me, and began to address me with some confusion, and a great show of warmth, on "a subject they had been discussing when I came up—a Christmas tree for the Sunday School!"

So, they could stoop to falsehoods to cover their uncharitableness! How I despised them!

all! and sat there with a burning face, wishing myself with my children, or back to the once undervalued friends of our late home, for they were true at least.

Our denomination had never made much of Christmas, they said, but it was becoming so general to notice the day, and the children, seeing others remembered and rewarded for good conduct, might feel it and grow dissatisfied! So, after many arguments and a playful appeal to the purses of the gentlemen who came in soon after, the thing was decided on, for there was but a week for preparation, and measures must be prompt. They intended to provide a book, or a toy, and *bon-bons* for every child in the Sunday-school. Trifling as the remembrances might be, it would cost—the calculations varied—but every one mentioned a sum large enough to pay our debts, as I thought to myself, and it seemed such a waste! I could scarcely refrain from saying so, and John must have seen how coldly I looked at him when he entered into it heartily.

That was not the last I heard of the Christmas tree! O no! The committee fixed on the parsonage, at John's suggestion, as their point of meeting. They deliberated in the cold at least, for I would not have had a fire made if I could have afforded it. I felt so indignant at the waste of time, and thought, and means! "How much good such a sum contributed to the missionary society would have done!" I said to John, forgetting how nearly I had uttered the words of Judas, and that it had once been said, "Inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." I grudged these little ones of His their innocent pleasure on the day that we have most reason to desire our thank-offerings to reach Him, through them.

I checked my own children sharply when they began to discover and wonder about the wonderful tree. "There will be nothing for us," I said, and I know I wrested His words when I added, hardly, "'To him that hath shall be given.' The children they are working for will be loaded down with gifts already, and your father and mother cannot give you so much as a doll."

The bills came in that week. Mr. Johns, who had sold me the shirting, apologized for sending his so early, but he knew the salary was drawn on the first of the month, and he needed the money, and thought it would make no difference to us. The grocer and the shoemaker did not soften the sum total of their demands by any kindly words. They were

both members of the church, and paid their pew rent regularly, and expected to be paid in turn.

I seemed to feel each bill in turn as it came near the door. I stood with the yellow envelopes in my hand, suspiciously free from post-marks, more than a minute before I could summon the courage to open them. It was little enough to you whose accounts reach hundreds, and you have only to hold out your hand for a cheque to meet them with, but to me forty-seven dollars was appalling.

I laid them on John's plate with a most unloving feeling. "He takes it all so coolly," I said to myself; "let me see what he will do now!"

"It is more than I thought for, Eunice." And he glanced up with a troubled expression in his wontedly calm face.

"I dare say; bills always are! What have we got to pay it with?"

"Eleven dollars is every cent we can call ours," he said, gloomily; for my words were almost taunts, and he felt them. "But I will not distrust my Master. He said the laborer is worthy of his hire, and He will see that mine is paid."

I had never entered into John's entire faith or reliance, though at times I had been made to feel that God provided for us, but now our position seemed too desperate. I started up from the table, careless of the presence of the wondering children, and walked the floor wringing my hands. "And Maria and mother are starving," I burst out; "and I have not so much as a morsel to give them, and you sit there so calmly, saying, the Lord will provide! I cannot bear it!"

It was not his fault that I had not been comforted by his sympathy, which was always ready, nor mine either. I had withheld my cares, feeling that he had much to bear, but now I was unjust enough to feel that he was indifferent to them.

"There, you can see for yourself." And I drew the still unanswered letter from my work-basket, and threw it down before him. I had not written them one word: what had I to say?

He sighed heavily when he had finished it; yet he did not resent my unkindness. His dinner was untasted, but he set back the plate, and rose and went into his study. He had neither silver nor gold, but he went to give them his prayers, and it was a keener reproof than words would have been. If—I had not even prayed for myself since the trouble came upon me. He prayed for me, too, I do not

doubt it, though he never told me so. The fierceness of my pain left me; I only felt a sudden rebellious aching, like the low returning ground-swell washing up on the beach after a storm. It lasted all that night, and even the boisterous Christmas greetings of the children did not drive it away.

"I will get the children ready, and you can take them," I said at breakfast, when they all talked and wondered over the magic wealth of the Christmas tree. "I shall not go," I added, as John looked up at me inquiringly.

"Yes you will, Eunice; I wish it," he said, with more firmness than he had ever used towards me.

To any one less fully bent on bitterness of spirit it was a lovely sight to see that cheerful crowd of happy faces, so eager, so radiant as they looked towards the great cedar tree, loaded with its golden fruit, and faintly burning tapers struggling with the sunshine, though the room had been darkened, and the teachers scarcely less happy, and the fathers and mothers looking on. I knew I had spoken falsely then. To many of them this was the only gleam of Christmas plenty that shone in on their toiling, burdened lives.

It was acknowledging this to myself, and listening to the sweet unbroken childish voices singing a Christmas hymn to the dear old tune "Coronation"—which my mother loved so well—that began to soften my frozen heart; and when the distribution commenced, and the little ones passed by me so elated with their treasures, and my own had been remembered so bountifully, I began to take shame to myself for seeking to deny it to them.

"See, this is for you, mother. Mr. Steele said I was to give it to you," Wesley said, almost dropping a sugar toy into my hands, in the overflowing of his own store.

"A sugar toy, when our very closets were empty!" I thought, with returning bitterness; for, as I listened to the mirth and merriment going on around the tree where John stood speaking a kind word to all who came, I saw that he too had received some baby prize decorated with ribbons, and gay with gilding. I crushed my own in my hand as I listened.

Ah, it was not as hollow as I thought, not as empty, for the sugared nut had its own rich kernel—a bank bill that went fluttering to my lap. A motto, as I thought, was fastened to it, but as I grasped it securely, believing that it was real and for me, I read, "Twenty-five dollars from the ladies of the congregation, for a silk dress."

Yes, twenty-five dollars! Oh, if they would only let me use it as I liked; it would go so far towards those dreary debts! and as I thought this in a strange tumult of surprise and pleasure, and shame—for I understood now what they had been talking about that evening at Mrs. Steele's, and why they hushed each other as I approached—Mrs. Steele, herself, came quietly up to me in the crowd, and meeting my grateful glance, whispered, "That is only a suggestion; we want you to do just exactly as you wish with it," I felt more than rebuked, utterly humbled before God, and those whom I had judged so harshly.

But this was not the end. There was a stir, and buzz, and hum around John, and I heard him say, "Dear brethren, you are too mindful of us, I do not know how to thank you"—and some one near me said, "Only think, a hundred dollars in gold; he found it in that little drum; doesn't he look astonished!" And after awhile John came and put it in my hand, and said, "Dear wife, will you believe me and trust the Lord now?"

I hardly know how I got home, or how that letter to Maria was written, but I folded up my share of the Christmas tree in it; and not until John himself had taken it to the post-office and returned to tell me it was gone, did I begin to realize that we were free from debt, and rich beyond all that we could ask.

I felt that I ought to confess to Mrs. Steele all my bitter injustice, when they were doing so much for us, and it was the beginning of a true, helpful friendship that has made my life here very happy. I see how pride and prejudice come between the hearts of the rich and poor, debarring them from the mutual comfort and aid they might receive, and I have been more tender towards Mrs. Strong's jealous envyings ever since, and have tried to persuade her out of them.

My mother is sitting in the sunshiny south window of our cheerful sitting-room, teaching Wesley his hymn for Sunday-school, and as I hear the fervor with which she repeats to them—

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face"—

It rushes into my mind how wonderful His leadings were to us all last winter! Maria is now the beloved friend and governess in Mrs. Steele's family, growing well and strong in sharing, as a sister would, all the comforts and luxuries I turned from, for her sake; and mo-

ther's home is with us, for Maria's salary is so ample that her old age has more of comfort than her life has ever before experienced. She is a daily, hourly help and comfort, by her cheerfulness, her trust, her wonderful activity and industry, which relieves me of half my cares and many of my household tasks, so that I am no more overburdened and disheartened by accumulated duties.

And our troubles, then, taught me the evil and rebellion of my own heart, which I never would have believed, and the confession of my fault to Mrs. Steele has brought all this comfort and happiness to us. So it was all best—it was all God's hand, that "pulldeth down and buildeth up again."

AUNT SOPHIE'S VISITS.—NO. VIII.

BY LUCY N. GODFREY.

AUNT SOPHIE was weary. Many weeks before, her husband had been prostrated by a dangerous disease, and it was only through her unwearied care that he had found strength to combat the destroyer. By night, as well as by day, her hand had ministered to his many physical wants, while her words of soothing or of cheer had supplied the best of mental influences. Uncle Charles, like many another gentleman, I trow, had never learned to be gracefully, or even patiently sick. While he seemed in immediate danger, his wife never left him, and he was content to receive from her hands the nourishment which his daughters had prepared; but, as he grew better, she had double duty to perform. It was all in vain that his children, fearing for their mother's health, should offer their best services; he always declined, because "he was used to" mother's reading, her cooking, and her care. Once or twice, Aunt Sophie tried to leave him, for a bit of rest, but she saw that he was made uneasy by her absence. Thenceforth she disclaimed all fatigue, though she was constantly active in devising means for beguiling the hours of their tediousness.

Now, all this was past. This bright afternoon her husband had gone to his office for the first time since his illness. Mechanically she arranged his room, and then threw herself upon the lounge, which he had vacated. Five minutes later, Emma looked in, and with an anxious, half-satisfied smile upon her face, covered the sleeper tenderly, darkened the room, and glided away. The hours sped on—Mr. Laselle returned, and wholly forgot his weariness as he stopped upon the threshold. When his eyes were accustomed to the want of light, he seated himself quietly by his wife, to await her waking. Her pale, attenuated face frightened him, and he realized, as he had not done before, how ceaseless had been her watching for months past.

"I must have been blind," he murmured; "but she never said she was tired." That word touched Aunt Sophie's consciousness. Spring-

ing up quickly, she said, before unclosing her eyes—

"No, I am not tired;" then gazing about in bewilderment, she allowed herself to be laid gently back upon the pillows. Then she had to assure her husband that she was not in the least sick, though she acknowledged her weariness. She asked him to open the shutters, and make the room cheerful for himself, while she finished her nap. When he feared disturbing her, she proposed his joining the girls in the parlor. Scarcely were her lips closed, ere Morpheus again asserted his supremacy. Uncle Charles was thoroughly anxious, and was only half convinced by Emma's assurances that she believed her mother would soon be herself again, now that she might rest.

"Something must be done," Mr. Laselle repeated, and forthwith he proposed a journey. He had already decided to go to R— soon; he should be very glad of his wife's company, and she could stop at her nephew's, as he had lately returned to his native village, but a dozen miles from R—. The whole plan was talked over, and decided upon. Mr. Laselle relinquished his idea of going in the cars, as he was sure that travelling leisurely in their own carriage would prove more beneficial to his wife; therefore, it became necessary to start sooner than he had intended.

"Well, she is always ready," said Uncle Charles, continuing, as Aunt Sophie entered the room. "Are you not, mother, always ready to take a journey with me?"

"Yes, I believe so when it is best that I should go," was the reply.

"Well, then, we will start for Cousin Ralph's, day after to-morrow." Aunt Sophie's firm "No, I think not," was met by a multitude of exclamations, but she quietly said—

"Girls, you may see how tea is progressing, and I think I can satisfy your father that I am reasonable in not wishing to go there now."

"Well, mother, what is your plea?" was Uncle Charles's inquiry, but the shade upon his face deepened as she answered simply—

"Weakness. I do not mean," she continued, as she noticed his anxiety, "that I have not physical strength for a much longer journey, leisurely as you propose travelling; but I am too weary and overworn to hear Ralph Hoyt talk. He always wearies me. His presence is enough to incline one to the belief, of which I have somewhere heard or read, that spiritual emanations from each one vibrate in the air, something after the manner of sound. I am sure that my soul is cognizant of some kind of clashing, every time we meet. He has such low views of our nature that I have sometimes thought he really dislikes to hear of a noble deed; he certainly is rarely at a loss for an unworthy motive to which to impute it. Everything concerning our finer feelings is a 'notion' to him; money, position, and luxurious living are the only realities he recognizes."

"I am surprised. I know Ralph is a hard fellow, but you never before objected to going there."

"Nor would I now, if I were strong. His wife is easily influenced. Under her affectation and silly pride, there is a fund of good feeling, which often echoes to my words. I may hope to do her good, while Ralph can never do me lasting harm, though I am not now equal to sparring words with him."

"I understand you, and I shall not wish you to stop there; but I insist upon your going with me to R—. We can start Monday and be all the week upon our way, if we so choose, and I am very sure I shall gain strength rapidly."

We would like to linger with our friends upon this pleasant invigorating journey. We might learn a fuller appreciation of nature's handiwork than has ever blessed us, were we to listen to their conversation, but our space is limited. Suffice it to say that Aunt Sophie found her strength so fully renewed as to wish to visit at her nephew's, where she was formally greeted. Her host, too, when they met at dinner time, was very polite, asking such questions of her family as propriety dictated, and listening deferentially to her brief answers. Pleasant gossip of mutual acquaintances followed, Aunt Sophie's views of "making out well," and the contrary, sometimes surprising her nephew, and his cool judgments of everything, by a wholly superficial standard, in no way conflicting with her former estimate of his character. At length he said, abruptly—

"By the by, Adelaide, you can never guess whom I have seen this morning!"

"Then tell me, for I do not pride myself upon being a Yankee."

"No less than the village belle, of ten years ago."

"What! Minna Williams?"

"Yes, Minna Lawrence now, however."

"O yes. I remember, Frederick Lawrence was such a perfect gentleman. I shall be delighted to see Minna. She will call of course, immediately, now she knows that I am here?"

"Yes, I asked her to call this afternoon, at half-past two."

"O mercy!" exclaimed Mrs. Hoyt, with a deprecating gesture. "Did you know no more of etiquette? Why she will think you a perfect boor."

"I will risk that. The truth is I was not sure that you would care to have her call, so I gave you an opportunity to ignore the acquaintance. I have known you to do more than one clever thing of the kind."

"Why, you cannot mean that Minna Lawrence is not a lady?"

"I mean that she teaches music for a living, and I thought perhaps you would like to have her instruct Alice, for I know she was a splendid performer."

"I declare, it is too bad. Is her husband dead?"

"No, but he is so dissipated. I doubt if he could get credit for his breakfast, if he should try. I heard that his wife had preserved the larger part of her property in her own hands, but her teaching does not look like it."

"Of course not; she would never teach till she was obliged to; but how does she look? Did she appear so very sad?"

"No, not sad at all. She had that old way of hers. Do you remember what Aunt Jemima used to say of her? That she was not proud of her wealth or accomplishments, though she had every reason to be of both; but she had a lofty way with her. That word *lofty* is very significant, I take it. I thought of it to-day as she stood there, talking just in the old way, only perhaps a trifle more earnestly. I am certain, I would not have dared to refer to her pupils, if she had not. She spoke of them, however, just as freely as she might have done of her Sunday scholars years ago. She told me too that Sue Smith, who, you remember, Adelaide, was such a little vagabond till Miss Minna took a notion to clothe her decently, and teach her a bit of manners, is about to marry young Somers. She pretended to rejoice in Sue's good fortune, and said she was worthy of it all."

"And why should she not rejoice in the good fortune of a *protégée*?" asked Aunt Sophie.

"Perhaps she would, so long as Sue owed everything to her, but then to have her going above her head is another thing, I take it."

"I don't see it so. I should think her feeling of self-gratulation might be akin to that of the old schoolmaster who taught Daniel Webster his letters."

"Ay, I see. Mrs. Somers can give Mrs. Lawrence admittance to the circle in which she has been wont to move, so Mrs. Lawrence will rejoice in her elevation."

"You misunderstand me entirely; no such unworthy feeling of interest could enter into the joy to which I referred."

"Well, you and I never did see things alike. I believe you are in earnest, and that is more than I will allow for most of your kind; but when you have seen as much of the world as I have, you will learn that there is a bit of difference between live men and women and their professions."

"How much older are you than your mother?" said Aunt Sophie, laughing. And thus the conversation was turned, for the time; but Mr. Hoyt again referred to Minna Lawrence before he left. It was evident that he enjoyed contrasting her present position with the one from which she had fallen; and Aunt Sophie understood his pitiful exultation when he coarsely referred to the fact that he had vainly sought an opportunity for asking Minna's hand in marriage, as he acknowledged that he should enjoy having her see the style in which he lived, and hinted the possibility of her regretting having lost so elegant a home for such a notion as congeniality. "Fred Lawrence," he continued, "seemed assentimental and religious as her heart could desire, and a precious deal of comfort she must have taken with him."

"You and I cannot judge of that," responded Mrs. Laselle; "but we can assure ourselves that, if she be a true woman, her marriage vow, whether it may have proved for better or for worse, is sacred to her. I cannot conceive that a woman who has lovingly and prayerfully given her hand to her heart's chosen can ever enjoy speculating upon the 'might have beens' of earlier life."

"I do not know why she should not; there is nothing like a few years of married life to take the romance out of any one. Why, I can remember when I was as much in love as any fool you could name. To be sure, I love my wife now, very much as other people do, but then I don't suppose but that there are a great

many other women who might have filled her place."

"Your talk is treason to my estimate of marriage. I might tell you of such unions as are but the beginning of the romance of life, marriages from which neither husband nor wife can trace their separate selves, so conscious are they of the ennobling influence which each has been able, through the blessing of our Father, to exert upon the other; but I fear you would not understand me."

"I certainly should not. I can see how one of a couple may be very much stronger minded than another, and thus exert a marked influence, but I am not sharp enough to see through your mutual influences."

"Nevertheless, if each, loving the other as a dearer self, strives, not only to ennoble that self, but also its life-companion, each shall advance more rapidly than either could do alone."

"That is it—you always take it for granted that people aim only to advance towards your transcendental truth and goodness."

"I was speaking of a true marriage; such could scarcely be found apart from true aims in life."

After the departure of her husband, Mrs. Hoyt hastened her elaborate toilet, and joined Aunt Sophie in the back parlor arrayed in a new brocade, much better suited for some festive occasion than a quiet afternoon at home. Her thoughts were all of her old friend, Minna, and, as the hour at which she had hoped to see her passed by, she could talk of little else. From her words, Aunt Sophie learned of the bright girlhood of Minna Williams, when, as a beauty and an heiress, admired and envied for her outward advantages while she was loved for the brighter charms of her noble character, she had been able to bestow many a favor upon her humbler associate, Adelaide Huntley. Adelaide had loved Minna, and, as she thought how lightly her friend had valued all external advantages, she did not feel the triumph which she might have done under other circumstances. She would greatly have preferred meeting Mrs. Lawrence as an equal; but, as fortune had favored her, she was disposed to wish Minna to be impressed with the full extent of this favor, and she expected that her old friend would feel flattered and under obligations for any condescension on her part, though she might attempt to conceal all such feelings. Adelaide had no idea of studying to reciprocate the kindly attentions which Minna had shown her years ago, but she quieted her conscience

the thought that it would not be just to herself to thus compromise her own position.

Aunt Sophie had been very much interested in what she had heard of Mrs. Lawrence, and she was quite as glad as was Adelaide when, at length, she arrived. A first view of the pale, delicate-looking woman, with such a depth of sadness in her dark eyes, was painful to those who had been fancying her as she had been in her gladder years; but the first impression was evanescent, for, when the sweet face became animated in conversation, there was no trace of sadness there.

"But where are your little ones, Addie?" said Mrs. Lawrence, at the first break in the conversation.

"Oh, Betty keeps them in the nursery, mostly. You know I was never very fond of children," was the reply.

"Not fond of children! If not, have you no duties to your own? Why, I shall have to lecture you as of old. Do you remember—"

Just then the door-bell rang, and, as Mrs. Hoyt shut the folding-doors between the two parlors, her visitor left the sentence unfinished. In truth, Mrs. Hoyt saw at that instant, as Aunt Sophie had done for some time, that Minna still held her place as superior, and she was just in the mood to resent it. Mrs. Hastings was announced, and Mrs. Hoyt, merely saying, "You see I must be excused, ladies. Aunt Sophie, will you not come in?" went to her more fashionable visitor. Mrs. Lawrence left immediately, though Aunt Sophie tried so earnestly to detain her as almost to have a claim to the invitation to call which she received.

As Mrs. Hoyt heard the hall door shut, she came out to urge Mrs. Laselle to see Mrs. Hastings. After the departure of this lady, Aunt Sophie remonstrated with her niece upon her rudeness to Mrs. Lawrence. At first, Mrs. Hoyt was indignant, and disposed to justify herself; but Aunt Sophie's earnest words awakened her better feelings and led her to regret her incivility.

"But what shall I do, auntie? If, as you say, Minna is just as proud, and just as much a lady as she was before she began to teach for money, she will never call again to give me a chance to be more careful of her feelings."

"Of course she will not. It is your turn to seek her society. But if you really wish to make amends for your unladylike conduct, you will not be long in finding an opportunity for showing her some neighborly kindness, as she lives but a stone's throw from here."

The day before Aunt Sophie left, as she was

about to take a ride with Mrs. Hoyt and little Alice, she proposed that they should ask Mrs. Lawrence to allow her little daughter to accompany them. When the request was preferred, the color went and came upon Mrs. Lawrence's cheek; but, meeting Aunt Sophie's kindly glance, she consented, and was rewarded by the sight of her child's joy. Mrs. Laselle called, upon their return, when all her prepossessions in favor of Mrs. Lawrence were confirmed. She was very anxious that the old intimacy between her and Adelaide should be renewed so far as possible, for she foresaw that her niece would be greatly benefited by such companionship.

When, two years later, Aunt Sophie again visited at her nephew's, she needed not to inquire of Mrs. Lawrence, traces of whose influence were manifest in the manners and opinions of her niece. Mrs. Laselle arrived unexpectedly, and, as she entered the morning-room, she was pleased to find the children with their mother, who said, cordially:—

"Ah, I am right glad to see you, Aunt Sophie; you see I don't always give up the little ones to Betty's care now. I believe, however, that you and Mrs. Lawrence ought to be considered responsible for the disorder this room is in, for you will recollect how tidy it used to be."

"I like its present appearance better," responded Mrs. Laselle, as she kissed the happy-looking little faces about her. "But all these are not your treasures?"

"No; that is little Katie Lawrence. You remember her mother, I presume. Mr. Lawrence is sick now, so Katie comes here often, and we are always glad to see her."

After the children left, Mrs. Hoyt told her aunt of her friend.

"You remember, auntie," said she, "how I judged the village manners by a city standard, and believed that if Minna, from choice or necessity, lowered herself by teaching, she ought to expect slights in consequence, which I so rudely showed her that, most likely, any future pleasant intercourse between us would have been prevented, if you had not talked to me so earnestly. I did the best I could to atone for my rudeness immediately, and soon learned that Minna had never been left out of fashionable society here. She had gradually withdrawn herself from evening parties and the like, as her husband had become unfit to accompany her, but had continued to make and receive calls as of old. Her music teaching and evident economy have always been a puzzle to me. Her father took care to leave the

greater part of his large property at her own disposal, and thus there can have been no real necessity for her depriving herself of every accustomed gratification, as she has done. I cannot believe that she likes to do so; it is so contrary to her old habits. Why, she gave me this pretty brooch I have on, in exchange for a white rosebud for her hair, and that is a fair sample of her old bargains, saving as she is now. I believe her selfish, brutish husband is at the bottom of the affair; but she rarely speaks of him, and never to attach any blame to him. I should like to tell her just how mean he is, for I don't believe she knows, though, to be sure, he has tormented her enough to teach her. She always has a smile and a cheerful word for every one. I used to think her cheerfulness was a mask to hide her real feelings; then I imagined that she had grown callous and unfeeling; but longer intercourse has taught me something of the unfailing source whence she evidently derives strength to bear the trials of her lot hopefully. Mr. Lawrence is sick now, and as cross as he well can be; he keeps his wife upon the run from morning till night, and she is as patient as an angel. She has dismissed her pupils, and lets little Katie come in here a great deal. I know that it is because she doesn't want the child to hear her father's fretful, irreverent language. I don't go in there much now, for it makes me so indignant and uncomfortable, while I know that my company gives no pleasure to Minna, since her husband does not regard my presence sufficiently to be decently good-natured. Perhaps he will pay more attention to you; if so, you must stay with her somewhat."

Aunt Sophie went in that afternoon, and very often afterward during her stay. She gained the confidence of Mrs. Lawrence more fully, and felt more real sympathy for her from these interviews than Mrs. Hoyt had done during years of intercourse. She could understand the deep love which led Mrs. Lawrence to so fully realize the wrong her husband was doing to his own nature that pity for him banished all thought of that which he caused her to suffer. She saw, too, that the devoted wife looked upon this illness as a harbinger of hope that her husband might some time be himself again, and, as she appreciated the cheerful, trusting piety which looked to the good All Father for strength to bear each day's burden, she realized that Mrs. Lawrence had far less claim to her pity than the wreck of a noble man who had fallen a victim to his own appetites and passions. More than once, Aunt

Sophie sat by the invalid while his wearied wife took a bit of rest. She could understand the sad unrest and dissatisfaction with himself which made it so difficult for others to please him; but she was sure that his wife's patience, gentleness, and Christian consistency must ultimately soften his heart; nor was she mistaken.

For many weary weeks after Aunt Sophie's return to her home, Minna Lawrence suffered with and for her husband. Many times his old affection for her fitfully revived, and he was ready to converse with her earnestly of his blighted life; but he was ever striving to convince her that he was wronged and abused; he had never been accustomed to self-examination, and there was no ray of brightness within him now to encourage him to such a task; therefore he cursed the companions who had first lured him into the downward path, and then stood mockingly aside when he fell below their level; while he hated nearly every one with whom he had lately come in contact, because he was treated with less respect than formerly. Minna constantly sought strength and wisdom from on high, that her every word and act might influence him aright, as she prayed earnestly for that special grace which should renew his heart.

Brighter days came. Frederick Lawrence saw his sins in their true light, and abhorred them. Very humbly, he sought Divine aid, while he endeavored to school himself to patient endurance of his physical sufferings, as the near duty, which should help him to see clearer those beyond. Minna's heart was gladdened by the change, and she enjoyed the society of her husband as she had not done for years. Solemn months followed, during which many a heart learned noble life lessons in that sick room. Ralph Hoyt and wife became frequent visitors there, and they learned much of the soul's true life.

When again Aunt Sophie was welcomed at his home, her nephew had lost his old sarcastic way of referring to everything good and noble. Minna Lawrence, with a bright, cheerful face, came to welcome her, and, when she had left, Adelaide had a long story to tell of those puzzling music lessons. The truth was, that Minna, with her womanly, loving trust, was blind to the folly of her husband, till he, by drinking and gambling, had contracted very heavy debts. She was jealous for his honor, and, the first time, paid all gladly, rejoicing in his solemn assurances that this should reclaim him; but when, time after time, he came to her with unmanly pleading, her eyes were

opened, and she took a firm stand. His whole patrimony and more than half her property were already gone; the income of the remainder must suffice them now, for no longer would she encroach upon the principal. Again and again he promised amendment; truly she ought to trust him, for only through her encouragement could he hope to stand. Each time she strove to assure him that he might be himself again, while she trusted him with her whole income and took pupils; vainly hoping thus to rouse his better feelings. Sometimes she was flattered by his withdrawal from his bad habits for weeks together; then, again, he seemed a very fiend, as he heaped upon her abusive taunts, because of what he styled the unwifely selfishness which led her to refuse to give him the control of her entire property. During his illness, her income was amply sufficient for their wants; but, after his death, she found that there were still large debts unpaid. Now she again divided her property and went back to her music teaching, cheerfully continuing the economy which she had taught herself, until every obligation, none of which were legally hers, was cancelled.

"Do you wonder," said Adelaide, as she finished, "that, sympathizing, as we have done with Minna, Ralph has lost his old habit of calling everything above mere legal right a notion?"

"No, I do not wonder at that," replied Aunt Sophie; "I only wonder that he could ever have indulged such low views of our nature. Educated as he was, he should have learned, from his own heart, of all truth and honor. Minna Lawrence is but one among a noble band of Christian brothers and sisters who derive strength and cheerfulness for every duty from a never failing source: would that we might know that her husband was not also one of a miserable, much-to-be-pitied, but too numerous class! We can ignore neither the good nor the bad, but, even as I would prefer light to darkness, I would allow my thoughts to linger upon the bright, holy attributes of our common humanity."

This latter visit of Aunt Sophie was indeed a pleasant one. Her nephew and his wife had not wholly forgotten their worldliness; but they had learned of a higher happiness, and sought to attain it. Little Katie Lawrence and Alice Hoyt were inseparable friends, sharing in the careful teaching which it was the pleasure of Mrs. Lawrence to give them. Katie's true development is the worthy life-work of her mother, and, in her promise of future useful-

ness, Mrs. Lawrence finds her brightest earthly joy; while her warm heart expands in sympathy with the large circle of friends whose love she reciprocates.

MISS SLIMMENS'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLOW FAMILY."

(Continued from page 68.)



CHAPTER XIX.

A COUPLE OF WALL-FLOWERS.

A WALL-FLOWER? O no, I'm sitting here just to rest myself. I've danced and promenaded till I'm tired out. I don't think there's a young lady in the room been *asked* oftener than I have, this evening; but my health's rather delicate, and I don't desire to overexert myself. 'Tain't for want of solicitations to do otherwise that I'm resting myself, Mrs. Granger.

How does sea-bathing agree with my health? Oh, first-rate. Jest observe that Mrs. Sullivan waltzing with that furriner; she flies around like a flounced top. If I was her husband, I'd put a stop to her conduct, or I'd shet her up in a convent. What conduct? Oh, I don't know. Watering-places are awful things to spread talk, and all I know is what I've heard, and of course I don't purtend to believe all I hear. Anybody can see for themselves that she's a dreadful flirt, but that isn't proving that she's a *bad* woman. It's silly and vain of her to gallavant around the way she does, but that isn't saying I believe what I've *heard*, common talk as it appears to be. Oh, nothing; I'm not a-going to repeat scandal. Her name's mixed up with another person's oftener than is safe for her; but you must use your own eyes and ears, if you want to satisfy yourself. They say it was just the same way last summer, when she was here, only worse, if possible. Her husband bought a horse-whip one day; I've understood, and that a certain dashing old villain sought safety in flight, the same afternoon; but it's probably dreadfully exaggerated; sech things commonly are. He's

so generous to her, too—allows her two thousand a year, pin-money; and she's always in debt, they say, for all. Anybody can see how fond he is of her, and she ought to be ashamed, going on and breaking his heart. If she'd make herself as pretty to *him* as she does to other men, she'd be doing a little more as she ought to. But don't breathe a syllable of what I've told you, Mrs. Granger, for I'm not certain it's true; and if it is true, it's none of my business.

Jest throw a look back over your shoulder at that couple standing by the window. Oh, nothing, nothing at all—only, if we stay here many days longer, maybe we sha'n't have to inquire. A body would think they wasn't conscious there was a soul but themselves in the saloon, they're so absorbed in each other. She needn't break her fan, if he does whisper to her in that killing style. There! she's shivered it all to atoms, and now she's laughing and blushing about it. Probably he'll present her with another equally expensive, and she'll accept it, if she is a married woman, and hadn't ought to. I never saw him before to-night. Do you know his name? Her husband? Oh-h-h, that makes a difference, of course; but I should think they'd better keep their love-making for their own private entertainment. If there's anything really sickish, it's this billing and cooing between married people in public.

O dear! did you ever? *That* dress takes the rag off the bush! If it was a little shorter at the bottom, and a little longer at the top, it would be improved. Sweet, did you say? Oh,

it's pretty enough, and too pretty. They say she's ruining her husband by her extravagance. That's the twentieth dress I've seen her have on since I came. But anybody with a pair of shoulders like them must set 'em off, at any price, if their husband is ruined, and their character, too. Black eyes and white necks are very nice, but they don't make good wives, as some men know to their sorrow.

What a sweet young man! Do you know him? I feel sure he is a poet—he has such a pensile appearance, and such a high white forrid. I wish I was introduced to him. It's pleasant to meet a congestive breast in a scene like this. O yes, I sometimes woo the Muses, simply for my own pleasure. I've published a few pieces, but I don't purtend to be an authoress. The most of my suffusions slumber in the retiracy of my portfolio. If the world chooses to claim them after I'm dead, it can have them. I shall leave them copied out in a clear, eligible hand, simply for the benefit of my friends. I've been solicited to publish a volume of my fugitive productions, but have ever hesitated. Of course, "filthy lucre" would be no inducement to a person of my means, and I'm indifferent to the bugle voice of fame.

You don't say so? Worth a million dollars? Of course he married her for her money, for she's as humbly as a mud fence. Silks and satins can't make her handsome. Isn't she dreadful yellow? She looks like a piece of white silk that's been washed and ironed. Got a high temper, too, I'll bet, by the turn of her nose and the look of her eyes. Her husband seems utterly subdued; I'll bet she snubs him. He looks as if she was continually telling him how much money she had brought him. It's good enough for him, though; shouldn't have made such a fool of himself. If anybody should marry me, and I should have reason afterwards to suspect it was my means they married, they wouldn't lead a very easy life of it; I'd keep 'em as uncomfortable as a kernel of corn on a hot griddle. If I ever do make up my mind to except any of the male sex as a husband, I shall wed from love alone.

See them young chits, dancing, and talking, and flirting like so many young ladies. They ought to be spanked and sent to bed! I don't know what their mothers can be thinking of, to let 'em carry on so in a public house. Anxious to get 'em married off, I suppose; mothers'll go any length, nowadays, to get rid of their daughters. If I'd went, and gone, and had children, I think I'd take care of 'em till they was of age, and not put 'em up in market,

and show 'em off to the best advantage, like a milliner the bunnits in her show-window. Puts you in mind to ask if I was ever a milliner? Do you intend to insult me? Oh, you'd heard; well, people shouldn't believe all they hear, 'specially at watering-places. I've heard you used to be a vest-maker before Mr. Granger married you, and that you made a vest for him the way he came to fall in love with you. Of course you'll deny it, but people that live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. For my part, I consider one honest person as good as another, whether they ever did anything for a living or not; but low people, that have got up in the world suddenly, generally put on airs. If I ever had been a milliner, I shouldn't be ashamed of it.

They say that pale girl over there, in the blue brocade, is dying of consumption, which means dying of love. She doesn't look as if she'd have strength of mind enough to bear a disappointment. For my part, I could bear a hundred disappointments, and not show it. I'd never let one of the masculine sex have it to boast that I was broken-hearted on his account. What? Do I speak from experience? Perhaps I do, and perhaps I don't. Her lover died, did he? Oh, that's a different matter. I admire constancy; it's a very poetical quality. I mean to write some verses, and send to the poor girl, to comfort her.

Do see that Widow Wilkins sail along in her second mourning! She's perishing to take it off, for she thinks it doesn't become her. I don't know why, but I detest widows. They're a vain and self-complacent set, the whole of 'em, and sure to get married again, even when they've more babies than they have dollars. I can't account for it, and I hate 'em.

Poor Mrs. Watkins! how she suffers, this warm weather! All the fans in the house can't keep her from being as red as a piny, she's so fat. It's a great misfortune to be so fat; I'd rather be as lean as a lath than as ounbersome as she is. Fat folks always dress in such abominable taste! There she is, sweltering in that black silk, for the sake of looking a little smaller than she really is. Short sleeves on those big arms! they look like bags of flour.

Well, well, Newport's a curious place, and I think it's a wicked place. There's all kinds of naughty doings carried on here, they say—wine and billiards, and vanity and wickedness. Most of people seem to come here jest to show themselves, if they're women, and to drink, and play, and do 'as they hadn't ought to, if

they're men. It's enough to make a reflecting person sick at heart. And it's such a place for talk, too. I've heard more scandal since I came here than I could repeat in a year. It's dreadful; I don't know what the world is a-coming to. For the land sake, if that giddy Mrs. Sullivan ain't a-dancing again! Well, well, I sha'n't say what I think of her, for I don't believe in talking.

CHAPTER XX.

ALL IS NOT GOLD THAT GLITTERS.

WELL, Dora, you've kept the house as neat as a new pin; there don't appear to be anything sitting around or wasted. I'm really very much obliged to you. Yes, I'm glad to be to home again, though I had a fine time, and saw a good deal of the world, in my absence. But it went hard to spend so much money; however, I trust it'll pay. How am I looking? Don't you think I've improved in my style, as well as my countenance? I weigh five pounds more'n I did when I left here, warm as the weather has been. You needn't be afraid to intimate me in anything you may see me do or say that's new, for I've been associating with the best society, and I intend to be the model of the fashionable people of Pennyville. I enjoyed it hugely, passing myself off for a million-heiress. The young gentlemen followed my footsteps wherever I moved, and fluttered about me like bugs around a candle. I could have had my pick out of a hundred; but, as I feared they were not entirely disinterested, of course I turned a deaf ear to all their entreaties, which didn't prevent my taking advantage of their devotion to bring me ice-cream, and walk with me, and stand by me in the windows, and take me out to ride, and so forth. If it had not been for that unfortunate little accident about the wig, I should not have had an occurrence to dampen my enjoyments. I've no doubt people, especially of my own sex, would have liked to have made more fun about it than they durst to openly; but it won't pay to laugh too much at the expense of a million-heiress—it isn't fallacy—and so the world held its tongue remarkably, considering, all but the widows and old maids, and I snapped my fingers at them. How about that wedding-cake?—hem! I sha'n't want it just yet, but I shall before long. That's the great secret of the whole, Dora. I'm engaged—engaged to Mr. Hopkins, point blank, and no mistake. The reason he did not accompany

me home, and have the banns consummated immediately, is, that his health renders it necessary for him to remain by the sea-shore during the warm weather; but he's coming to pay me a visit about the tenth of September.

Set a thief to catch a thief! That man's a regular fortune-hunter, and he thinks me plenty richer than I am; but he's got money of his own—nigh on to twenty thousand dollars—and I'll get his money, if he don't get mine. Turn about is fair play; he's no business to be so mercenary himself, if he don't want to be paid in his own coin. I saw through him as clear as a pane of glass; but he's respectable, and aristocratical, and rather good-looking, and a favorite among my own sex, and I didn't feel bound to throw so good a chance away. I'm afraid it's a little risky, letting him come to Pennyville first; but he made the arrangement himself, and I didn't know exactly how to get out of it. Good Lord, Dora, you ought to see the women at Newport! You'd get some new ideas in that innocent head of yours. Of all the humbuggery, and the big-buggery, and the dressing, and flirting, and fooling, and pretences, and extravagance, and worse—they need a minister to preach to them worse than the heathens that worship crocodiles. Such things as I riveted out by making good use of my senses! I tell you, I put this and that together, till I got the truth of many a pretty story; and I didn't feel bound to keep it to myself, either; for, if people do what they hadn't ought to, they must expect to suffer the consequences. I guess some people were glad when I came away. Folks that are painted and powdered don't like to be scanned through too sharp a pair of spectacles, 'specially of the magnifying kind. I didn't care for the enmosity of the females, so long as the men were as polite as they were; I didn't go to Newport to get in the good graces of women. Women hate each other; it's human nature. Of course, since I joined the church, I don't say that I hate any of my fellow-creatures, except widows. They're so designing and so seducing, I can't abide 'em, and I won't purtend to. 'Tain't rivalry alone makes women despise each other so; it's because they can see right through one another. The men get the wool pulled over their eyes, and they're flattered and fooled so, they don't see it; but we see each other at it, and we understand it, and we know how it's done, and why they did it, and all about it. What's sweetness, and innocence, and prettiness to the men, is artfulness, and complicity, and vanity to us. Law, Dora, we laugh in our

sleeves at the men, and we like 'em at the same time; but we don't love each other when we laugh at one another. We're dreadful backbiters, the whole of us—except a few like you. I can't remember I ever heard you say anything ugly about anybody—not even about Philista Podd, when she was trying so hard to catch your George. There comes that quiet little smile of yours, which means, I s'pose, that you were too certain of George's heart to be troubled about Philista; but, even if I *was* certain, if I'd been in your place, I couldn't a-helped showing her how triumphant you was; but you was just as meek as a dove, and as kind and polite to her as if you didn't know she'd give her head to be in your shoes. And she's got Mr. Barker, what with running here to catch Mr. Little; so she didn't quite throw away her time and trouble. Mr. Barker, beside of George, is like a duck beside a swan; but he's just the husband for Philista, and you're just the wife for George. I can afford to say it, since I had sech a hand in making the match. And, since I'm in a fair way to make a very opprobrious union myself, I can afford to let other folks be as happy as they're a mind to.

Look! jest look at old Mehitable going by. She looks worse 'n ever. I guess she sees my trunks piled up in the hall, the way she stretches her long neck, peaking in. Poor old thing! she hain't got money to take her to Newport. She'll hatch up a new nest of stories about me now, see if she don't, she'll be so spiteful. It will be an awful spell of weather that'll keep her to home, next Sunday; she'll come to meeting to see what I've got on and how I look. It's a sin and a shame what some people go to church for. If it wasn't they were afraid they should be set down for heathens, and they want to see who's there, and if they've got a new bonnet, or turned and trimmed their old silk, or who's going to join, or get married, or have their baby baptized, they'd never go near. They don't go to hear the word, nor to repent of their wickedness. They set, and purtend to be listening to the minister, while their thoughts are running on their neighbors as busy as ants on an ant-hill. If there's anything particularly sweet and good about a body, they'll fix on that to gnaw and destroy all the sugar of the best disposition. They feast themselves on good qualities; so if any one's a good deal remarked about, it's a certain sign there's something eatable about 'em. I'm going to wear the very best I've got, next Sunday, because I know there'll be some who'll come

to criticize and find out what I've got. That bunnit, you know, I bought just before I left home, and I haven't worn it in Pennyville yet.

But speaking about home reminds me I've got back to mine, with plenty to do. Them trunks are to be unpacked and set away, and the girls seen after, and—oh, dear me! sence I've had such a resting-spell it comes hard to take hold again. I've been so used to being waited on, and having servants running after me, it don't seem natural to be waiting on other folks. I can stand it a month or six weeks longer, and then we'll see who's ready to take her boarders off Alvira Slimmens's hand. I've a notion to offer the business to Mehitable Green. My! wouldn't the boarders groan in soul and body under her dispensations! I make no doubt she's as penurious as she's avaricious. Them kind of pinched up old creatures always are. La! I'll never get done talking if I don't quit some time. I haven't begun my story yet, but must go about my unpacking now.

Here, Susan! Caturah! take hold and carry these things up stairs. I'll take them dresses myself—they're my nice ones. These old calicoes and things I jest stuffed in to fill more trunks; it's fashionable to have lots of baggage. Throw this salt-bag full of sand out in the street. I've paid extra on my trunks on account of their weight; for I was determined they should pass for all they were worth. Some folks guessed there was *gold* in 'em.

La! Mr. Bethuen, how do you find yourself? I've got back, you see. You're the first of my family, excepting Dora, I've had the pleasure of welcoming. Thank you! my health's very much improved. Nothing but the probability of improving it would have induced me to go to so pleasure-seeking and frivolous a place as Newport. I've learned a lesson in vanity and display, Mr. Bethuen. "All is not gold that glitters"—no, no! anybody that's been to Newport can say, with Solomon, "All is not gold that glitters."

Editors' Table.

COUNTRY LIFE AND ITS ADVANTAGES.

God made the country, and man made the town;
What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threatened in the fields and groves!

COWPER.

Here, too, dwells simple truth; plain innocence;
Unsuited virtue; sound, unbroken youth,
Patient of labor, with a little pleased;
Health ever blooming; unambitious toil;
Calm contemplation, and poetic ease.

THOMSON.

Poets have always sung the pleasures of sylvan scenes and country life. This is the proof of true genius, because the highest ideal of the condition of hard labor imposed on the human race when banished from Eden always recalls the glorious beauty of the "Garden" planted by the Creator, where Eve gathered roses before a thorn had been developed to wound the fair hand that tended the flowers.

Thus poetry, true poetry, we mean, coveting the best, loves to revel in the beauties of nature, and seeks to draw the human heart from worshipping the vain pomps and crushing multiplicities of trivial pursuits, ever pressing on the time and thoughts of the dwellers in the city.

This truth of poetry, however, is not often acted upon, even by those who feel its wisdom. There seems to be a propensity in mankind to congregate in masses, each individual hoping to be benefited, in other words, to be helped along, by the general prosperity. To a certain degree, this is done; yet the disadvantages, dangers, diseases, and distresses to which far the larger number of the dwellers in a great city are subjected would, were these reckoned up and described, unfold a fearful and appalling picture of wants and woes from which country life is happily exempt.

We were not intending to discuss this matter either poetically or philosophically, and have been led away by the poetic propensity from our plain prose purpose of showing how life in the country may be made, even for delicate woman, who has been brought up in the luxurious ease of city surroundings, a real *Idyl* of enjoyment.

"Our Farm of Four Acres, and what we Made by It"—have you read this little book?

The story, as interesting as the newest novel, is the experience of two London ladies in the art of retrenchment and country life. It commences thus:—

"Where shall we live?" That was a question asked by the sister of the writer, when it became necessary to leave London, and break up a once happy home, rendered desolate by sudden bereavement.

"Oh," answered H., "there can be no difficulty about that. Send for the *Times*, and we shall find dozens of places that will do for us."

"But," said I, "what sort of a place do we really mean to take?"

"That," replied H., "is soon settled. We must have

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No. 25 Park Row.

a good sized dining-room, small drawing-room, and a breakfast-room, which may be converted into a school-room. It must have a nursery and five good bed-chambers; a chaise-house and stable for the pony and carriage; a large garden, and three or four acres of land, for we must keep a cow. It must not be more than eight miles from 'town,' or two from a station; it must be in a good neighborhood."

"Stop, stop!" I cried. "How much do you intend to give a year for all these conveniences?"

"How much? Why, I should say we ought not to give more than \$250."

After a troublesome search and many disappointments, these ladies settled themselves on "Our Farm of Four Acres," in "an old-fashioned but very convenient house, with plenty of good sized rooms, in excellent repair; a very pretty flower-garden, with greenhouse; good kitchen-garden of one acre; an orchard of the same extent, well stocked with fine fruit trees; three acres of good meadow land; an excellent coach-house and stabling, with houses for cows, pigs, and poultry, all in good order." For this farm, the rent was \$370 a year.

The book is the record of their domestic management, with all their mistakes, mischances, and ultimate triumphs. It tells of their curious experiments in butter making with a racy humor that will make their experience remembered. It shows their successful management of cows, pigs, hens, ducks, pigeons, and their only failure—on rabbits; and also what harvests of hay and vegetables, besides the luxuries of fruits and flowers, may be gathered from a "farm of four acres" when the proprietors are in earnest to make the most of it, both in profit and pleasure.

They say truly that "any trouble which may be experienced by the lady superintending her own dairy and farm will be repaid by having her table well supplied with good butter, plenty of fresh eggs, well cured hams, bacon, delicate fresh pork, well-fed ducks and chickens." All these country dainties are easily to be procured on a "farm of four acres."

"Nor must another item be omitted—health; for, if you wish to be fortunate in your farming, you must look after things yourself, and that will necessitate constant exercise in the open air."

We wish the successful experiment of these English ladies could induce some of our American ladies to emulate their example so pleasantly described in this little book. We earnestly commend its amusing story to our readers who are seeking to find some better way than they now have of living in comfort.

In the close confinement of city life, health fails for lack of fresh air and suitable exercise, and a family of children often require more expense and trouble in taking them out of town during the hot weather, or in doctors' bills and nursing if they are kept in the city, than would be required to maintain them the year round in the country.

Now that horse cars are placed on so many streets and avenues leading out of great cities, a "farm of four acres" might be enjoyed by many families who are in the city obliged to live in crowded boarding places or in

very small houses. It is often remarked that the ladies of city families are greatly averse to living in the country, because there is nothing to interest them. But, if they would make their rural residences places of comfort, beauty, and attractiveness, as they might do, as the London ladies did, they would soon love their "farms" better than all the world—where they had no home.

There is another class in our land who greatly need this opportunity of country life—ladies who find themselves reduced from opulence or sufficiency to the necessity of close economy, or more, to the hard condition of earning their own living, perhaps making a home for children or invalid relatives. A lady thus situated, no matter how refined her tastes, how liberal her education, how elegant her manners, must, if she have the true heart and soul of a woman, throw off the trappings of fashionable life, as the tree tossed by the tempest drops its blossoms and fruit, yet what remains after the storm is passed may brighten and ripen, and prove of more worth than though all the bows had retained their full fruitage. So the woman who suddenly feels the heavy burdens of life crushing her untired strength, if she resolutely keep herself in the sunshine of duty, may find a better happiness than she ever enjoyed in the full blossoms of her summer prosperity. Yet it is hard finding out what to do, and the best manner of beginning a new mode of life.

There are but few resources by which an educated lady can earn or gain for herself and children, if she has these to support, a competent livelihood. To open a boarding-house or a school are the usual methods of securing a home for these homeless families. Needlework, except by the aid of the sewing-machine, is a poor dependence; the machine is a wonderful aid to the needle, and will give employment and competence, no doubt, to many a woman; and the literary profession is a resource for a few; but to have a real home, an independent home, where hand, heart, and head all find full, healthy, and pleasant employment and enjoyment, give us the "farm of four acres" and country life.

We wish we could induce some of the many ladies who, wanting an occupation and support, apply to us to know "what they must do?" "if they can succeed in literature?" etc., to follow the example of these sensible English women, and see if they cannot find "health, profit, and amusement," as those ladies did; and, moreover, the security and peace of a good home. Then the American lady might say to her friend, as the English authoress did:—

"None know better than yourself how worn out in health and spirits we were when we came to this place; how oppressed with cares and anxieties. Without occupation, we should most likely have become habitual invalids, real or fancied; without some inducement to be out of doors, we should seldom have exerted ourselves to take the exercise necessary to restore us to health and strength. With God's blessing, we have improved in 'mind, body, and estate,' by occupying ourselves with 'Our Farm of Four Acres.'"

"THE EFFECT OF FASHIONABLE FOLLIES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY."

[Such is the title of a long article sent us by a lady of great influence and worth, whose opinions would be respected by the most fashionable society. We give now a portion of her earnest appeal, and shall make extracts from it as we have room and occasion.]

"Are you aware, dear friends, that time is rapidly

passing? Do you ever pause and reflect that this, the nineteenth century, is more than half gone? Memory still green tells us that we have progressed in art and science, applying them, with all the ingenuity that man can devise, to every mechanical purpose that assists us to annihilate space by land or sea. But, as we progress in the higher branches of art, literature, and science, does the moral life keep pace with it? Does it sanctify our homes, keeping pure our hearthstones? Does it shed a halo of light around our social position in the world, binding man to man in one common tie, of brotherhood, of humanity, and love? Does it keep pure the ballot-box of our country's weal, for which our fathers fought and died, leaving, as a legacy to their children's children, this bright star of liberty, that was to shine out upon our banner as a beacon light and example to all the world?

In the last century, children were healthy, strong, and robust; they were disciplined so as to fill the places of their parents in the future. No late hours were allowed to prey upon the health and scatter the rose-tinted bloom on the cheeks; 'it was early to bed and early to rise'; the fresh morning air invigorated, giving healthy appetites; they were keen, then, for study or for play. They were clad neatly, but plainly, and could exercise freely, with no fear of spoiling their garments; thus giving an elasticity to life and limb that lasted long after the springtime of youth had passed away. They were taught to pay a deference to their elders, and the aged were never passed by without a respectful salutation. They were children in every sense of the word, and not miniature men and women. Precepts of gentleness, love, and truth were early instilled into their minds, and they stand out upon the pages of American history, the noble men and women of the Revolution.

But, with the march of improvement on the one hand, and innovation on the other, Luxury crept into our homes, and children began to partake of fashionable follies; later hours were tolerated, clothing was of a finer and more costly fabric; of course indoor amusements took the place of healthy exercise in the open air. They developed into manhood and womanhood earlier; the deference due to their elders was on the wane; their intellectual faculties matured, but were warped by pernicious reading; the light works of the day began to soil the purity of their morals; parents looked on and deplored the fatal results of their injudicious guidance when all too late to apply the remedy.

Time rolled on; their children, the youthful aspirants for fame in the present day, what are they? Many of them weak, sickly, and effeminate, with minds that have dwindled down to an atom of space; scarcely chicks out of the shell, when they have become corrupted by fashionable follies. There is no longer deference paid to their elders, and the aged are passed by with heedless contempt, while the green sapling rears his head in all its imbecile folly. Childhood, in its simplicity, is rarely met; silks and laces must be worn by the young miss, while the young master must be decked out in broadcloth and yellow kids, assuming consequential airs belonging by right to their venerable seniors. They are educated for pleasure and the ball-room; their conversation is flippant; they become enervated by dissipation and late hours; and what little intellectual knowledge they may attain dies out for want of nourishment.

Look at that young man stretched out on yonder bed. The down has scarcely sprouted on his chin. His eyes have a glassy stare; his brain is clogged by nighty

potations; he raves, madly raves, sending a pang to the hearts of those parents who neglected his youth; he dies, and his soul returns to God, the giver. Where does the guilt lie? This is no fiction, but as it happened, as it is still happening continually.

That maiden, is she not breaking the hearts of her parents by sullying the purity of her life? Her imagination is vitiated by impure reading until her soul has become tainted, and the very air she breathes is a charnel-house of guilt. Such as these, if they live to maturity, are to become the parents of what? Of a generation, net of health, of life, or of moral worth, but of a degenerate race of babbling idiots. Thank Heaven, there are yet many left with high intellectual and ennobling principles. They must be the regenerators of the race; they must teach their sons the value of moral worth, for without it the mental will eventually die out; their daughters, who are to become wives and mothers, must be taught to value their homes and the duties belonging there, and whose aim is not to shine in a ball-room, but to train souls for their highest destiny.

Mothers, look around you, and mark the results of the demoralizing effects of fashionable folly, as it is depicted in the pale countenances of your daughters, in the slender and effeminate bearing of your sons; open your eyes ere too late to its influence on the young lives intrusted to your care. Teach them to use life and the purposes for which life was given them rightly, or a fearful retribution will awaken you to your neglect when the death knell of your departed hopes shall have rung out its sad requiem over un-*timely* and dishonored graves."

THE WOMEN OF JAPAN, AND WHY THEY ARE EDUCATED.

—The civilization of a people must be estimated by the condition of its women; by this test Japan, though far behind the Christian nations of the world, is in advance of any other heathen people. Women in Japan are at liberty to appear in public, and some of the most esteemed writings in Japanese literature are by authoresses; and yet women are possessed of no legal rights, their testimony is not even admitted in a court of justice. In the family they are subjected entirely to the male head in whatever relationship, father, husband, brother, or son, he may stand to them. When the daughter marries, she leaves her father's house completely, and is adopted into that of her husband.

The reason why women are so well instructed and such ample means provided for the education of girls, is that the wife may entertain her husband in his hours of leisure. She is not permitted to aid with her counsel in his affairs, whether public or private; but she must be able to charm him by her graceful manners and vivacity of conversation. Polygamy is not permitted, but the husband can easily obtain a divorce; and in the higher classes, concubinage is practised; this custom marks the degradation of both man and woman, nor will her education have effect on the moral character of the people, till the religion of the Bible shall restore to Japan the Eden law of marriage.

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN AMERICA

is intended to purify the morals of social life, as well as to refine the manners, and elevate the mental power of the people. Consequently, those who lead in the progressive development of all forms of the good, are united in the effort of extending and perfecting the systems of female instruction. Scarcely a week passes without bringing us some cheering intelligence on this subject,

setting forth what has been done, or what is in preparation. Among these last embryo institutions is that of Mr. Matthew Vassar, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y. We learn that he has determined to establish and endow an institution for the collegiate education of young women, to be located at Poughkeepsie, and to bear the title of the Vassar Female College. The plan contemplates a course of study similar to that which is pursued in the leading colleges; the detail of operations being left to the discretion of the Directors.

TROY FEMALE SEMINARY.—The examination of this long-established and popular school was held in June. The "Report" of the Committee, gentlemen of eminence and learning, is very encouraging to those who believe in the capacity of woman to reach such proficiency in all learning and science as shall qualify her to be the companion of man, in his intellectual as well as moral pursuits and attainments. There was no pretension nor sham in the examination; the committee say—

"They are acquainted with no college or school, either male or female, where there is a higher standard of scholarship required, or where that standard is so nearly attained by all the pupils. There may be, no doubt there are, higher branches of study pursued in some of them, but the same work is not and cannot be more thoroughly done elsewhere. They had the fullest and finest opportunity given them of testing the ability and acquirements of each scholar. In every case the class was wholly and unconditionally given over to their direction. They arranged the order of subjects and assigned them at pleasure. There was not the shadow of a chance for anything like collusion or double-dealing on the part of teachers or scholars. The strictest fairness and honesty of purpose were apparent throughout, and characterized every exercise. The committee are happy to bear this public testimony to the perfect candor of all parties concerned, because in more than one instance the great fluency of young ladies in recitation and the promptness and accuracy of their replies led casual hearers to suppose that particular themes had been previously assigned to each one and thoroughly learned for the occasion. Nothing could be farther from the truth or more remote from the range of possibilities than such a supposition. The fact, however, that it was entertained by any one is the strongest incidental proof of the proficiency and thoroughness of the pupils and of the almost faultless character of their recitations, while at the same time it demonstrates most conclusively that the committee have not over-estimated either. They mention this as a simple act of justice to the teachers and young ladies who have labored together so faithfully and successfully in order to produce such gratifying results."

The various departments are then dwelt upon—Languages, Composition, Mathematics, Astronomy, Metaphysics; in the last most wonderful clearness of understanding was shown by the young ladies; and in the ornamental branches—Music, Drawing, Painting, etc.—they seemed equally proficient. But one remarkable feature was the ability shown to comprehend the mechanical sciences.

"In the department of *Hydrostatics, Pneumatics, Electricity, and Magnetism*, the apparatus is full and well assorted, and the illustrations interesting and varied. The mechanical principles and practical working of the Steam Engine were fully explained from a most delicately constructed model, so small and so beautifully finished

to be an object of wonder to all present. Steam was generated by the heat of an ordinary spirit-lamp. A member of the class was the engineer, and pointed out very clearly and satisfactorily every law which regulated the movements of the intricate little machine. The committee feel that they cannot commend too highly this mode of teaching, and they mention this experiment as but one of many that were to them and to all present of the greatest interest. They feel the great importance of putting *theory* and *practice* side by side. An interest is thus imparted and an enthusiasm excited that the bare pages of a text-book could never reach."

Now all this knowledge is important, as showing the capacity of woman's mind; but there is still a higher elevation to reach. No young lady expects to become an engineer, nor to devote her precious time and the fine powers of her intellect to the elucidation of those sciences that pertain to man's department of industrial pursuits. These cannot be mistaken when, like the steam engine, strength of muscle, as well as of mind, is required to manage its forces, exposures and perils are to be encountered, and *home* and "household good" must become a secondary object or a delegated trust. To understand the mechanical principles and practical management of a Sewing Machine would, in our opinion, be better knowledge for a young lady; nor will the education of woman reach its noblest end till the best manner of making the learning she acquires at school, the means of promoting improvement in her domestic, social, and moral relations, is thoroughly taught her, and its great importance impressed on her mind, while she is most susceptible of impressions. Nearly all large seminaries of education for girls are deficient in this particular; there is no department of household science; but this is soon to be remedied in one denomination.

ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FOR YOUNG LADIES.—At the examination of the Mount St. Vincent's Academy, Archbishop Hughes made the following remarks, which should be carefully pondered by those who have the charge of Protestant schools:—

"Although it is of the utmost importance, young ladies, that you have a good education, should be accomplished, cultivated, graceful, and refined, yet there are other things that cannot be lost sight of. Before another year rolls around I purpose to arrange with the Sisters for a new branch of study in the Academy. That branch of study is what the French call the science of *cuisine*. It is the science of keeping house, and that we all know commences with the kitchen. Every young lady, I don't care if she be a Queen's daughter, ought to understand this department of life. Even though she may not have to practise it, though she may be able to hire her cook, yet she should understand it herself, for it may happen some day that the cook will dismiss her. What a predicament she would be in then! Well, what I was going to say was that the Sisters should arrange it so that all the girls over thirteen years of age should be enabled to spend a portion of the time in the kitchen, and become acquainted with cooking and housekeeping. Here will be a new bureau of education. We shall then have the theory and practice."

These Catholic schools are popular with many who do not belong to that faith, because of the careful attention paid to the pupils; if this neglected branch of the "science of *cuisine*" is also taught in those schools, the advantages will be increased. We hope "The Vassar College for Young Ladies" will have a perfect depart-

ment of Health and Household Science: such a department is all that is needed to perfect the "Troy Female Seminary."

THE SEWING MACHINE AND ITS MERITS.—We cannot better reply to the many inquiries made on this subject than by giving the testimony of a gentleman who has thoroughly examined into the merits of the machine* which we have commended in preceding numbers of our Book. The extracts are taken from the *United States Journal*.

We had no conception of the rapidity with which machines are being introduced into families and manufactories. This company occupies the extensive Jerome clock factory, at Bridgeport, Conn., where it employs several hundred hands. The same system is there pursued as in the various armories of the United States—similar pieces in all the machines being made to correspond exactly with each other, so that, in case of destruction, they can be immediately replaced at slight expense.

We have been led to these remarks by a visit to the sales-rooms of the Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine Manufacturing Co., No. 505 Broadway. We found their ample rooms thronged with visitors and purchasers, examining machines, and receiving instructions as to operating them. This company introduced their machines into families some years since, and is the company "par excellence" that manufactures family sewing machines.

The model is so light and graceful, and the finish so beautiful, that one is prepossessed by its appearance before understanding any other of its excellencies. The sewing by these machines, when properly executed, cannot be ravelled or ripped any more than ordinary hand-sewing, which it equals in durability, while the beauty of the stitch is far greater. In quilting, and all kinds of stitching, they seem indispensable. All necessary knowledge for operating them is readily acquired at the sales-rooms, where full instruction is given.

They combine all the improvements that have been invented. Their extensive and increasing sale, and the unanimous approval and commendation that they have received, warrant us in warmly recommending them. They have been in use sufficiently long to test them thoroughly, and have given entire satisfaction.

Families or neighborhoods should contrive to introduce an invention which has uniformly received the highest awards of every industrial exhibition and institution in the world, as an instrument of great practical utility. We unhesitatingly say that they are a necessity of the times—of eminent practical value, and should be distributed broadcast throughout the land."

CHANGES IN LIFE.—The following interesting sketch is one of the lessons that teach forcibly the true "mission" of woman in her most lovely development of character, that is, being able to adapt herself to the fortunes of her husband, and "help" him in all good and noble efforts, if she has been rightly trained:—

"When Robert Peel, then a youth, began business as a cotton-printer, near Bury, he lodged with his partner, William Yates, paying eight and sixpence per week for board and lodging. William Yates's eldest child was a girl named Ellen, and she very soon became an especial favorite with the young lodger. On returning from

* Wheeler & Wilson, 505 Broadway, New York. Agent, Henry Coy, 628 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

his hard day's work at 'The Ground,' he would take the little girl upon his knee, and say to her, 'Nelly, thou bonny little dear, wilt be my wife?' to which the child would readily answer, 'Yes,' as any child would do. 'Then I'll wait for thee, Nelly; I'll wed thee, and none else.' And Robert Peel did wait. As the girl grew in beauty toward womanhood, his determination to wait for her was strengthened; and after the lapse of ten years—years of close application to business and rapidly increasing prosperity—Robert Peel married Ellen Yates when she had completed her seventeenth year; and the pretty child, whom her mother's lodger and father's partner had nursed upon his knee, became Mrs. Peel, and eventually Lady Peel, the mother of the future prime minister of England. Lady Peel was a noble and beautiful woman, fitted to grace any station in life. She possessed rare powers of mind, and was, on every emergency, the high-souled and faithful counsellor of her husband. For many years after their marriage she acted as his amanuensis, conducting the principal part of his business correspondence, for Mr. Peel himself was an indifferent and almost unintelligible writer. She died in 1803, only three years after the baronetcy had been conferred upon her husband. It is said that London fashionable life—so unlike what she had been accustomed to at home—proved injurious to her health; and old Mr. Yates was afterwards accustomed to say, 'If Robert hadn't made our Nelly a "Lady," she might ha' been living yet.'

MISS S. J. HALE'S BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES, 922 Spruce Street, Philadelphia.

This school is designed to give a thorough and liberal English education, to furnish the best facilities for acquiring the French language, and the best instruction in music and the other accomplishments. An accomplished French teacher resides in the family, and also an excellent teacher of music, who gives her personal attention to pupils while practising. The moral training and the health and physical development of the scholars are carefully attended to.

References: Mrs. Emma Willard, Troy, N. Y.; Henry Vethake, LL.D., Wm. B. Stevens, D.D., Wm. H. Ashurst, Esq., Louis A. Godey, Esq., Philadelphia; Charles Hodge, D.D., Princeton, N. J.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT.—We regret to say that this excellent department will be omitted this month, in consequence of a mistake of our own, which absence from home prevents us from remedying. We make this statement in justice to Dr. Wilson, who is always prompt in furnishing his articles; and as we know these are highly appreciated, we feel sure that our readers will regret the omission. There is a way of finding a substitute. Buy and read during this month a work by the same writer. It has been lately published and is thus commended by *The Observer*, one of the most popular religious journals in New York.

WOMAN'S HOME-BOOK OF HEALTH. By J. Stainback Wilson, M.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

"A much needed and useful book—prepared with judgment and taste, and altogether fit to be recommended to mothers for their discretionary use in the education of daughters."

We shall say more about this in our next number.

Our Southern friends, who need a good teacher, may find one from this notice:—

A lady accustomed to teaching is desirous of a situa-

tion in a seminary, or as governess in a family, at the South. A place near the coast preferred. Can teach English branches, French, and ornamental needle-work. Best of references given. Address L. E., Box 319, Birmingham, Broome Co., New York.

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE PICTORIAL MOUNT VERNON.—We have received but one name this month.

R. C. Rice, #2, Elmira, N. Y.

MOUNT VERNON ASSOCIATION.—Miss Cornelia Andrews, #1, Woodville, Tenn.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.—The following articles are accepted, and will appear whenever we have room; but the crowded state of our drawers may keep the writers long in waiting. We cannot help this delay; so we trust our friends will have patience: "The Forest Flower"—"Life's Changes"—"Our Baby"—"Retribution"—"My Prairie Home"—"Winter Winds" (the other poems not wanted)—"How she Managed" (we should like to see another story from the author)—and "Gone to Heaven."

The following manuscripts we must decline, thanking their authors for the kind favors they intended: "Birth-rights"—"The Heart's Cloud"—"Lines to Miss L. * * *"—"Marian Thomwell" (the story is well written; but wanting in incident and development of character)—"Mignonette"—"A Romance in Rhyme" (we are sorry to put this with our waste papers; many beautiful passages and true poetical images are scattered through the stanzas; but we have not time to peruse it; the author must condense her ideas, and she will succeed)—"Song"—"A Word in Season"—"Oh! There's a Stillness," etc.—"Let me go with thee"—"A Great Design"—and "What is Knowledge?" We have other articles on hand that will be attended to next month.

MATCH-MAKING.

BY EDITH WOODLEY.

"OLIVE, what do you suppose I've been thinking of?" said Miss Lois Palmer, as she clipped off her thread, with a pair of bright, substantial scissors, at the end of a long seam.

"It is impossible for me to imagine, Aunt Lois; what have you?"

"Something that concerns you."

"Me?"

"Yes, and a certain other person."

"I can think of no one you would be likely to associate in your mind with me."

"Well, there *is* somebody, and this isn't the first time I've thought about it."

"About what?" was the question Olive longed to ask, but she restrained her impatience.

"'Twould be a capital match," said Miss Palmer in a way as if she was speaking to herself, and was unconscious of the presence of her niece.

Clasping her plump, rosy hands, and pressing them firmly down on the sewing work which rested on her lap, her countenance assumed a look of abstraction, as if, by turning the matter in her mind, she was endeavoring to prove, in a manner satisfactory to herself, the truth of what had involuntarily escaped her lips.

"Yes, a capital match," she repeated after what seemed to Olive a long time, and nodding her head with a quick decided motion, by way of giving emphasis to her words. She then drew a long breath, and settled down into the easy attitude natural to her, as if content with the conclusion she had arrived at.

All this time, she had been totally oblivious of the bright expectant face turned towards her.

"I declare, Olive," said she, with a little start, "I'm so used to being alone, that I forgot you were here. You want to know about it; I see by your looks that you do. But, after all, there isn't much to tell. The truth is, a

few days ago, I was passing by where Mr. Annesley lives, and the thought struck me, all at once, what a nice thing it would be if you could be mistress of the fine old mansion, surrounded by grounds laid out so beautifully, and in a manner so exactly suited to your taste."

"But the owner of the house and grounds might be of a different opinion."

"I don't believe he would—I have a particular reason for thinking so." The last part of the sentence, however, merely passed through her mind, so that her niece was none the wiser for it.

"*My* opinion may be in the way, then," persisted Olive.

"You would stand in your own light, then, as many a foolish girl, placed in a similar situation, has done before you."

"Well, aunt, for the sake of breaking up the monotony of this dull rainy afternoon, and diverting our attention from that incessant drip, drip, drip from the eaves, what if you should describe this Mr. Annesley to me?"

"You know, child, I've no talent at description; when you see him, you can judge for yourself."

"You can at least tell me how old he is."

"He doesn't look as if he was a day older than thirty-five, though people *do* say—"

Here Miss Palmer abruptly broke off, setting her lips firmly together. Olive, who half suspected that, on second thought, her aunt concluded that it would be best not to divulge what was supposed to be his age, looked up from the low ottoman on which she was seated, with a smile warm and bright, though, as must be confessed, with a spice of mischief in it.

"What is it that people say about Mr. Annesley's age?" said she.

"No matter," replied Miss Palmer, a little captiously.

"Now, Aunt Lois, it is too bad to excite curiosity, and then refuse to gratify it."

"What is the use in repeating the idle gossip which is always floating about in a country village like this?"

"What is floating about in the village, I shall be certain to hear before long."

"That is true, and, on the whole, I may as well tell you as not. People *do* say that he is ten years older than he looks to be."

"And what does he say?"

"To confess the truth, I don't think that any one has ever heard him contradict it; but then he wouldn't care if people said he was twice as old as that. At any rate, he is a good man, and that is better than both youth and beauty."

"Aunt Lois," said Olive, with a look of great demureness, "why don't you set your cap for him."

"Olive! Olive Palmer! never speak of such a thing again," replied her aunt. "I wouldn't set my cap either for him, or the best man in the United States, even were I sure of succeeding."

The voice in which this was spoken was sad rather than stern, while a look of patient, sorrowful resignation, which Olive had seen more than once dim the brightness of her aunt's face, —usually the impersonation of cheerfulness and good humor during the few days she had been with her—revived the memory of a conversation she had heard when a child, which, though she was too young to fully comprehend its import, left a vague impression on her mind that something many years previous had happened to cause unhappiness to her father's only sister. Tears sprang to her eyes in a moment.

"Forgive me, dear aunt," said she; "I didn't mean to say anything that was wrong, anything that would hurt your feelings."

"I know you didn't, dear child, and so there's nothing to forgive."

Miss Palmer remained silent a few moments, many a sleeping memory of long ago assuming sudden vitality and flitting through her mind, mirroring, as they passed, their lights and shadows on her countenance.

"Olive," said she suddenly, and with an air as if it had cost her an effort to break the spell, which those revived memories had woven around her, "I am going to tell you what made the subject I spoke to you about, suggest itself to my mind."

"You mean about this Mr. Annesley?"

"Yes. At first, I thought I wouldn't, but if

you would like to know, I don't see as 'twill do any harm."

"I should, of course, like to know, for, as my father tells me, I am a true daughter of Eve."

"Well, it was because you look so much like a young girl Mr. Annesley once expected to be married to."

"Were you acquainted with her?"

"O no; I never saw her, and had never seen him, till long after his disappointment. It isn't more than five or six years since he came to live at Beechdale."

"Then how can you know that I look as she did?"

"I will tell you. About three months after Mr. Annesley moved here, as I was passing his house, the sun broke through the clouds which had obscured it all the morning, when, twenty or thirty paces in advance of me, a gleam of something bright, like gold or silver, flashed out from the midst of a luxuriant tuft of clover which grew by the wayside; I remembered, at the same moment, that it was the first day of April, which caused me to recall to mind the old adage, 'that all is not gold that glitters.' Not caring to excite the merriment of a group of boys, who had stationed themselves at a short distance to watch the fate of several packages of sand and sawdust they had deposited on the sidewalk, I concluded that I would pass the tuft of clover so leisurely as to enable me to decide whether it was tin or silver, gold or glass, which shone with so much brilliancy."

"And which did it prove to be?"

"Gold—a plain gold locket, with a black ribbon attached to it."

"And did you find the owner?"

"O yes; that was easily done, for on the back of the locket was inscribed, 'Austin Annesley to Clara Dermont.' Mr. Annesley wasn't at home, but his housekeeper expressed great joy at my having found it."

"You can see what makes it valuable," said she, handing it to me, after pressing a spring which caused it to open."

"A young bright face looked up to mine, so nearly what yours is now, that you might readily be taken for the original. I didn't then know that Mr. Annesley was a bachelor, and supposed it might be a miniature of his wife, taken before their marriage. Mrs. Ford, the housekeeper, told me that he was engaged to the lady whose name was engraved on the locket, but that she died suddenly the very day which had been appointed for the bridal."

Miss Palmer spoke these last words hurriedly,

and Olive saw that the color suddenly left her cheeks.

"You are unwell," said Olive.

"I'm a little faint—that's all. It will soon pass off."

It did, and Olive was satisfied. She did not know, as she afterwards did, that the disappointment of Mr. Annesley was in many respects identical with one which had cast its shadow over her aunt's youthful days.

It haunted her still, that cry of mortal agony, which rang through the air as she stood watching for the approach of one who had long been absent. Sometimes it came upon her suddenly when her heart was full of sweet and sunny thoughts, like the dash of a raven's wing across a nest of flowers.

The storm of the preceding day and night had ushered in one of the brightest and balmiest of May mornings. Miss Palmer and Olive hardly waited for the western breeze to dry the grass, ere they were out on the green sunny slope in front of the house, carefully raising up the peonies, tulips, daffodils, and other early flowers bordering the paths, which had been beaten down by the wind and rain.

"I love old-fashioned flowers," said Miss Palmer, as she emptied the cup of a large red tulip, half filled with water, which must have been beaten to the ground, and perhaps broken, had not a tuft of pansies modestly lent the support of their gold and purple leaves.

"Do you love them better than new-fashioned ones?" asked Olive.

"Yes, and such as these above all others, except lilacs, and the white and damask roses you will see, if you will stay with me till June."

"Why do you love them better?"

"My mother loved them—so did my father. I never heard him say so, but I have seen him looking at them in a way which made me know that he did."

"Oh, I understand now," said Olive, a shade of sadness stealing over her face, and her voice dropping almost to a whisper.

"It may be," resumed Miss Palmer, "that that is why I think others must love them, and which made me place them here, for the sake of the passers-by."

"For me, among others, you will permit me to think," said a pleasant voice.

"Certainly," replied Miss Palmer.

At the sound of a strange voice, Olive started a little, and from beneath the shade of her little white sunbonnet, saw a gentleman standing close to the sweetbrier hedge which pro-

tected the flowers and shrubbery. Taking hold of her niece's arm, Miss Palmer led her towards the hedge.

"Mr. Annesley," said she, "this is Olive Palmer, my niece."

Her voice quivered a little as she spoke, and Olive felt the hand tremble which clasped her arm. Somewhat—she could not realize why—the gratification, almost joy, she had looked forward to, in witnessing the first meeting between Mr. Annesley and Olive, had given place to a sort of sad, pitying veneration, never felt before, for one who as she knew, while he had never ceased to cherish the sorrow as too sacred to be forgotten, which had crushed the sweetest hope of his earlier years, was ever cheerful in the presence of others, ever kindly considerate of whatever might be conducive to their happiness.

Unconsciously, she was viewing him through the lens, which needed only to be introverted, to give a reflection of her own experience, and her own moral and emotional nature, allowing only for those physiological shades of difference which form the traits peculiar to the character of either sex.

The natural ruddiness of Mr. Annesley's complexion grew a shade deeper the moment Olive's face was turned towards him, and then as instantaneously changed to many shades paler. A feeling of remorse smote the heart of Miss Palmer, as she watched these changes. She had been too abrupt; it was as if, by the power of some necromancer, Clara Dermont had been placed visibly before him. How easily, keeping Olive in the back ground, she might have thrown out a few preparatory hints. But ere the fervor of her self-reproach had time to abate, Mr. Annesley, to all appearance, had recovered his equanimity.

Gently, even tenderly taking Olive's hand in his, he said a few words to her which she never afterwards could fully recall to mind, though she felt at the same time, and never lost the impression, that there was something in them very kind, even paternal; such as a man of delicacy and refinement might with equal propriety address to a daughter, or any young girl, whether friendless, or, like her, under the protection of one of his best and most highly valued friends.

After speaking to Olive, he remained several minutes chatting pleasantly with Miss Palmer, giving her niece good opportunity to note his general appearance. She paid little heed to his dress, and yet she was aware that it was in perfect keeping with a certain air, such as she had

often in day-dreams, to which she was somewhat addicted, pictured to herself as belonging to a prince or an emperor. It differed, however, in one respect; being entirely free from that hauteur which, according to some hypothesis of her own, she supposed to be one of the peculiar and infallible attributes of royalty.

If she had particularly observed his dress, she would have seen that it was not in accordance with the fashion of the day. On the contrary, it was the exact counterpart of what he wore at the age of twenty-five, full twenty years previous, and at the commencement of the nineteenth century. Thus, as Miss Palmer had told Olive, though he did not look a day over thirty-five, he was ten years older than that;

"Rumor, though a pipe,
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,"

having for once told the truth.

"I shall call soon," said he as he turned to go, "and you may expect to see a young friend with me I am looking for to-morrow."

As he said this, his eyes glanced towards Olive with a pleasant though rather sad smile.

"Well, Olive," said Miss Palmer as soon as he was beyond the reach of her voice, "do you like Mr. Annesley?"

"Yes, Aunt Lois, I do."

"Better than you expected?"

"A great deal better."

"I thought so by your looks."

"And judging by his looks I think he likes me."

"He does, no doubt—he could not help it; but then it is in a sort of mournful way—that I could plainly see, for all he spoke and smiled so pleasantly, and not in the least like what I thought of, when I first mentioned him to you."

"That is why I like him so well."

"I was wrong, and you and he are right; I can realize it now."

"Yes, he likes me, and will, I am sure, should we often meet, soon come to look on me almost the same as if I were his daughter."

"Not quite, you think?"

"No, if his affection were gauged by the tender, watchful, and disinterested love of my father. You know, aunt, without my telling you, that he, your only brother, is the best and dearest father that girl ever had—so willing to overlook my foibles—so ready to give me full credit whenever I do right."

"Yes, I know, and how could he help it, when his only child was motherless?"

"I have been trying to think," said Mrs. Palmer, after remaining silent a short time,

"who that young friend he is expecting can be."

"Whoever he is, I should rather that Mr. Annesley would call alone," said Olive, "as it would give me a better opportunity to become acquainted with him."

A sound from the brass knocker. Though brass, it was polished to such a mellow brightness that, so far from having anything about it that looked in the least brazen, it seemed to be a kind of visible sign of the warm and genial hospitality which was always certain to be found within.

"That is Mr. Annesley's knock," said Miss Palmer; "I can always tell his from all others."

A sudden crimson brightened Olive's cheeks as she said, in a low voice, "I am glad he has come; I was afraid he would forget."

For the moment, she did not remember that he had said he should bring some one with him. A single rapid glance sufficed to show that, as much as she wished to cultivate Mr. Annesley's acquaintance, the presence of his young friend could hardly prove unwelcome. There was something in his appearance so superior, so far removed from anything which she had seen in those few young men she had hitherto met with in the vicinity of her own home, that, while it made a favorable impression, it produced a certain elevation and buoyancy of mind, which were very pleasant.

His name was Lucian Clive, and his mother was Mr. Annesley's sister. Soon after her marriage, she accompanied her husband to the West Indies, where he owned a plantation, and where they still resided. Although thus connected by ties of kindred, he did not in the least resemble his uncle, either in form or feature; there was, however, in his carriage, the same easy, unstudied grace, and, what was far better, the same air of openness and candor; yet, so entirely removed was it from that blunt, abrupt manner, and freedom of speech which some, as a plea for their own rudeness and unconciliatory temper, dignify by the name of frankness, that it could not fail to win the confidence and good-will of others.

Taking it all in all, there was something to Olive extremely charming and attractive in Lucian Clive's appearance, and yet, after he was gone, she could not have given such a description of his person, much more of what she thought of his intellectual endowments, as would have been at all satisfactory to herself, although a perfect, even vivid consciousness of each existed in her mind. She could not have told how the least tinge of red—just enough to

indicate the free and healthful flow of life's warm currents—breaking through the olive of his cheeks, heightened, by contrast, the almost dazzling whiteness of his broad forehead; nor that clustering round it were innumerable rings of soft, night-black hair. Neither was she aware that his finely curved lips, his nose slightly aquiline, with the thin, flexible nostril which old patrician families of other lands were wont to consider a distinctive mark of good blood, gave to his countenance, expressive of much intellectual power, its peculiar look of refinement. It might have been that she was under the influence of "love's young dream;" at any rate, what she saw of him during his first call, and several afterwards, was like catching the ripple and sparkle of a stream without comprehending or even caring to fathom its depths.

Lucian Clive, the three last years of whose life had been devoted to travelling in America and other lands, had necessarily been brought in contact with numerous and diversified classes of society, each of these, as well as the individuals composing them, being, of course, subject to various modifications, in many instances sufficiently palpable, in others running into shades of difference so nice and subtle as to be hardly distinguishable. Hence, during his absence, he had imperceptibly acquired that habit of ready yet delicate and accurate observation from which naturally spring the power and aptitude for analysis. He thus had the advantage of Olive, being capable of seizing at once upon, not only the more vivid and piquant traits, or what might be termed the salient points of her character, but of discerning, if not in every instance the actual presence, the cheering promise of those many elevating and genial qualities which pervaded and harmonized the whole, and which are the unfailing dower of every true and lovable woman.

"Look at it, if you would like to," said Mr. Annesley to Lucian Clive, seeing him reach out his hand to take a miniature lying on the library table, and then immediately checking himself.

He gladly yielded himself of the permission.

"How beautiful, how lifelike, and how expressive of her real character!" he thought, as his eye rested on the beaming, animated countenance.

Something, however, not far removed from a frown, the next moment, cast a shadow over his brow. It was, as he imagined, the miniature of Olive Palmer which he held in his hand;

and the question, "Why should my uncle have her likeness?" passed like a flash through his mind.

"I think you've seen it before?" said Mr. Annesley, interrogatively, and wholly unconscious of his nephew's suspicion.

"Never."

"I have the impression that I showed it to you years ago."

Lucian eyed his uncle keenly, in consequence of what to him appeared this strange remark, as he again assured him that he never saw it before.

"What do you think of it?" inquired Mr. Annesley.

"That it is a most excellent likeness."

"Nothing could be truer to the life than it was."

"And is still, I should say," remarked Lucian, a little curtly.

His uncle, apparently lost in his own thoughts, paid no heed to this remark.

"It might be mistaken for Olive Palmer's likeness," said Mr. Annesley, arousing himself from his reverie.

"And isn't it hers?"

"No; she for whom it was taken died twenty years ago. Her name was Clara Dermont. Is the name new to you?"

"Entirely so."

"I thought that your mother might have told you about her. They would have been sisters-in-law had Clara lived. But we will speak of that some other time. Tell me, now, how you like the miniature." And, as he spoke, he brushed back the brown hair from his forehead, as if by doing so he could rid himself of the painful memories which had been called up.

"I don't know how I could help liking it," replied Lucian, a little ashamed that he had for a moment supposed that in his uncle, who could not be less than twenty-five years older than Olive, he had found a rival.

"You like it for Olive's sake; I am glad of it."

Lucian did not deny the truth of this assertion, and the subject was dropped.

"I don't see that there will be any use in waiting," said Mr. Annesley, taking the chair which Miss Palmer had placed for him near the fire; for, though the last of May, the morning was chilly.

"Nor I," replied Miss Palmer.

"I think her father will have no objection to receive Lucian as a son-in-law."

"None in the world."

"To remove even the shadow of a doubt on the subject, it may be well for you to write to him before there's any communication on the part of my nephew."

"I have already written. I know little of the so-called art of letter-writing, but I know how to put my thoughts down on paper, and so I wrote to my brother all about it. I told him of Lucian's good qualities, and, as for his failings, he has so few that I thought they were hardly worth mentioning."

At this moment, the door opened, and Olive, with a little wicker basket on her arm, piled high with wild flowers, such as violets, and those white-leaved flowers which fringe meadow brooks, entered the room. Nothing could be more fresh and radiant than the young face surrounded by its luxuriant tresses of golden brown, now in slight disarray from her long walk. The smile which hovered on her red lips, and broke in gleams of light from beneath the shade of her dark, rich eyelashes, lost none of its warmth and sparkle at sight of Mr. Annesley.

"Where did you find your flowers?" said he. "I went out yesterday for the express purpose of hunting some large purple violets like those; but not one could I find."

"The sunshine knows where to find them," she replied.

"And May" (May was a pet name he had given her) "knows where to find the sunshine; and, what is better still, she finds a place in her heart to keep it in."

"If she didn't," replied Olive, gayly, "the flowers she keeps there would droop and die."

"I suspect," said Miss Palmer, "that Olive has found out what I've heard called bottling the sunshine. At any rate, she has a place for it where it keeps well, and seems always ready for use."

"And let me tell you, Lucian," said Mr. Annesley to his nephew, who just then made his appearance at the unclosed door, "that it is the best investment man or woman ever made, inasmuch as it will prove to be a better fund for a family to draw upon for happiness than all the gold and silver that was ever coined, provided"—and he dropped his voice a note or two below its usual key—"provided there's always a well-furnished larder at the disposal of a willing and competent cook."

"I would not undertake to cavil at an assertion," replied Lucian, smiling, "which you have guarded with so much ingenuity, even were I inclined to doubt its being tenable, which

I am not." And, as he spoke, he looked at the bright face of Olive, as she stood at a table arranging her flowers, in a way which showed that she had her full share of influence in silencing his doubts. Soon afterward, he joined her, and helped her place the flowers in vases, which gave Mr. Annesley an opportunity to inquire of Miss Palmer if she had received an answer to the letter which she sent her brother.

"I have," she replied.

"And is it favorable?"

"Yes. He was kind enough to say that he could place full confidence in my judgment, and should therefore raise no objections, though he had hoped to keep his only daughter with him a little longer. He has two boys, younger than Olive, who are as bright, cheerful, and good as she is, in their way; but then you can readily imagine that the place of an only daughter like her can never be exactly filled. He has one of the best of housekeepers, however, a little precise, perhaps, but none the worse for that; so that everything will go on the same as it always has since he had the misfortune to lose his wife."

There was a smile in Mr. Annesley's eyes, rather than on his lips, as he cast a furtive glance towards Lucian and Olive. "It will be a match—there can be no doubt of it," said he; "and 'twill be one of my own making."

"How so?"

"Before answering your question, permit me to inquire if you understand the true philosophy of match-making?"

"No. I confess that I must plead ignorance as to the philosophy, if there is any."

"I think there is, and believe it to be simply this: give any two young persons who, you think, possess the requisite qualities for mutual attraction, well-timed opportunities of meeting each other, and then let them alone; if you tell them, in so many words, that you have brought them together for the express purpose of bringing about a match between them, in nine cases out of ten their antagonism will be excited, causing them to be on the lookout for faults rather than perfections, and thus, instead of promoting, you will defeat your object."

"And that is the way you have done?"

"Yes, I contrived to bring them together, and then just let them alone."

June had come over the green and breezy hills, from the sunny vales of the south. With her crown of roses were twined a few of the still fresh and delicate flowers, dropped from the hand of May, as she lingered to hear the clear sweet bird-notes swelling into full and

delicious tides of song to welcome the advent of her more brilliant sister."

The day was near its close, when Mr. Palmer drove up to his sister's door. He had come for the purpose of taking Olive home with him.

Not being expected, his arrival was a pleasant surprise both to his sister and daughter. As may be imagined, they had many things to say to each other. The short summer twilight deepened into night; the stars shone forth one by one, and finally the waning moon came up from behind the eastern hills, warning them of the near approach of midnight, ere they separated for the night.

It has been said that between simple and noble persons there is always a perfect understanding. The little party assembled in Miss Palmer's parlor, the ensuing evening, proved that there was truth in this assertion, slight as had been the opportunity for Mr. Palmer, Mr. Annesley, and Lucian Clive to become acquainted. Attracted by the sincerity common to each—that golden alembic in the moral world which throws off the dross, and assimilates the purer elements of humanity—they felt that they were already friends.

At an early hour the following morning, Olive was ready to return home with her father. As they were about to step into the chaise, Mr. Annesley, a little flushed from his hasty walk, arrived to take leave of them. There was no need for Lucian Clive to hurry, for, having been seized with an unusual desire to examine Miss Palmer's flowers, he had arrived in season to commence his inspection at sunrise, which left him time for a very pleasant chat with Mr. Palmer.

"I am sorry to have you go so soon," said Mr. Annesley, "but there is comfort in knowing—nothing in Providence preventing—that we shall have your daughter back again the first of October. For my part, I think September should be the time for the wedding."

"October will be full as soon as I shall wish to part with her," replied Mr. Palmer.

"And full as soon as she can get ready," said his sister. "You men haven't the least idea how much preparation is required when a young girl like Olive expects to go to house-keeping."

"I suppose not," replied Mr. Annesley. "And, come to think about it, I too shall have something to attend to. The old mansion must be fitted up in a manner suitable for the reception of a young bride."

Lucian, during this brief colloquy, approached

Olive, who had taken her seat in the chaise, and placed in her hand a moss rosebud, saying, as he did so, "Expect to see me soon."

Nothing more need be said, except that Olive, with the assistance of her Aunt Lois, who passed two weeks at her brother's for the express purpose, as she said, of "cutting out, and making the napery in a fit and proper manner," found no difficulty in completing all necessary preparations at the time appointed for the marriage, which was celebrated according to the simple and solemn rite which custom had sanctioned.

ORESTES AND HYPATIA.

A TALE OF EARLY MOSLEM CONQUEST.

BY INITIA.

CHAPTER I.

False views, like that horizon's fair deceit,
 Whose heaven and earth but seem, alas, to meet!
 MOORE.

THE Saracen caliphate had just been established. Mahomet, with the consummate skill that characterized his lofty genius, had bound up in the bold creed, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet," the corrupt system of Christianity, the remnant of Judaism, and the absurd superstitions of the Arabs that had divided the religion of his country. His splendid pretensions, the intrepid boldness with which he urged them, his brilliant exploits, had subdued Arabia to his sway, scattering his enemies, and captivating the hearts of his countrymen. And now that he was gone, the gigantic spell was unbroken, the magic wand unreversed. Animated by that enthusiasm which faith and devotion alone can rouse; their imagination fired by the Paradise he had taught them was prepared for the faithful; believing themselves the ministers of God, commissioned by His inspired Prophet to conquer the world, and convert it to the sacred Islamism, the Arabian chieftains rushed to the feet of Abu-Bekir, their first Caliph, and implored him to lead them on to victory.

It is impossible to describe the warlike host that, under the command of his lieutenants, swept through Arabia. Every tribe sent forth its warriors, burning with zeal for the cause of "God and Mahomet," to join the sacred throng. Morning and evening, the consecrated crescent that the great Prophet himself had borne to battle, and for which many a bold Moslem had shed his lifeblood, was elevated; and, as the revered symbol of their faith met the adoring gaze of the Moslems, the thousands on thousands prostrated themselves, with their faces towards Mecca. Silence fell over the mighty throng, and, through the thrilling hush, the impassioned prayer ascended as from one heart. As the moving mass arose, the sunbeams flashed from the gleaming armor and gorgeous trappings in a thousand dazzling waves, making the vast plain a sea of glancing light.

To the north of Arabia lay Syria, with its magnificent cities, its fertile valleys, its famed rivers—the sacred Jordan, the Abana and Phar-

par of Scripture; the Sabatum, that ceased to flow on the Sabbath; and the Adonis, whose waters were annually tinged with the blood of the Thammuz the Syrian women bewailed; even its far-reaching desert could boast a Palmyrene, or land of palms, whose capital was the splendid Palmyra, the Tadmor of Solomon, the city of Zenobia and Longinus. To this land, so glowing in associations, the Saracens first directed their arms. It was, too, in a section of this province that Christ and his disciples had established that religion before which the mythology of Greece and Rome, though supported by all that was great, venerable, and attractive, had crumbled away. It claimed to stand alone, as the only true faith, and, consequently, stood in direct antagonism with the creed of the Moslems. Animated by so many and powerful motives, the host of Saracens might well be deemed invincible.

Obeidah, to whom the Caliph had intrusted the chief command of his armies, for the conquest of Syria, was one of the most powerful of the chiefs. Fierce in war, vindictive in revenge, of indomitable courage, he yet possessed some of those generous virtues that, by a strange and opposing affinity, are oftentimes found in otherwise savage hearts. Associated with him in command was Caled, whose cruel nature was redeemed by no virtue. Thirsting for war, as a mode of gratifying his insatiable love for power and pleasure, it was to him a wild and delicious excitement; and so fierce and desolating was his onslaught that he was called "The Sword of God." Under these and other leaders, all bold, daring, and enthusiastic, the Moslems swept on towards Damascus, their first point of attack.

CHAPTER II.

Oh, if there be a human tear,
 From passion's dross refined and clear;
 A tear so gentle and so meek
 It would not stain an angel's cheek—
 'Tis that which pious fathers shed
 Upon a dateous daughter's head.—SCOTT.

DAMASCUS, the capital of the kingdom of the same name, was situated in the midst of a vast and fertile plain; and, occupying a central

position between the Mediterranean on the west and the Euphrates on the east, had early become enriched by the costly trade in gold, gems, spices, and silks, carried on between the western nations and Arabia, Persia, and all Central Asia. It was famed for its magnificence. Splendid temples, costly edifices, lofty domes, and glittering spires; marble porticos and colonnades; colossal statues and a thousand classic memorials of Grecian art attested its wealth. Lofty palms bordered the streets and public walks; fountains flung upon the air their cooling spray; extensive gardens delighted the eye with the gorgeous flora of the East. So beautiful was the surrounding country, that the Arab believed it the original Paradise, and called it, in his rapturous admiration, "The Eye of the East."

The religion of Christ had early been planted in Damascus. It was on his way thither that the persecuting Saul was miraculously converted; here he preached that Gospel whose truth is so wondrously attested by the conversion of its most bitter enemy into its devoted and ardent champion. Christianity, notwithstanding the fierce persecutions to which successive Roman Emperors had subjected it, had flourished in Damascus, which, at the period under notice, might be called a Christian city. Cyril, the venerable Patriarch, was regarded with boundless love and veneration. In him the Christians beheld the meek gentleness of Christ. On his lips ever dwelt words of kindest sympathy and tenderest love for man. His eye shone with pure and holy light, and his lofty brow, over which floated his thin, gray hair, was stamped with the impress of high converse with God. His benevolent heart introduced him to a thousand scenes of grief and suffering; and to relieve, console, and sympathize were his daily offices. In his missions of mercy, he was often accompanied by Hypatia, his lovely daughter, and only remaining child. She was the soft dove whose gentle cooling made glad his heart and home. The last earthly tie that bound him to life, in her were garnered up the concentrated feelings of his tender soul. Deprived of her mother at an early age, he had supplied the place of both parents. Rarely gifted by nature, under his skilful culture she had bloomed into the lovely flower whose beauty was only a type of its exquisite fragrance. He had communicated to her all the rich and varied store of learning of which he was master. He had formed her to be the companion of his mind as well as the sharer of his heart and the light of his home. Together they had compared

the systems of Plato and Socrates with that of Christ; and a solemn awe had stolen over her spirit as the sublimest human philosophy had shrunk into insignificance when contrasted with that stupendous scheme revealed in the Gospel. The burning philippics of Demosthenes and the thrilling appeals of Cicero had made her a patriot. She had wept with Andromache at the parting of Hector; and been made glad with Penelope at the return of Ulysses. The sciences of Egypt and Chaldea had unrolled their mysteries to her, and she had traced amid the burning stars a thousand imperishable memorials of the history, poetry, and philosophy of those ancient nations. Lighter accomplishments, too, had lent their refining grace to complete the charming whole. She was mistress of music, and her slight fingers swept the strings of her lute with exquisite skill; while her voice, in its rich swell, elevated the soul, or, in its tender cadence, melted the heart. Her own pure nature had taught her all those virtues whose types are found in the devoted Ruth, the self-sacrificing Hannah, the pious Shunamite, and the gentle mother of Christ. With such an angel in his heart, small wonder that Cyril was the idol of the Christians of Damascus. His daily life was a revelation of the virtues of his child.

Twenty summers had not left the heart of the beautiful Hypatia unstirred by love; the soft passion brooded in its profoundest depths. She was beloved by Orestes, the Roman Governor of Damascus.

CHAPTER III.

Beauty's effect on soul.—BAILEY.

To say that the heart of Hypatia had been won by those external attractions that so often captivate, even when unaccompanied by moral or mental excellence, were to do her injustice. Hers was an imagination to be fascinated and absorbed by the higher graces of *mind*. Orestes was no Adonis. The toils of war and the privations of arduous campaigns in savage countries, far removed from the great seats of comfort and civilization, had left their traces upon his person. His thin features and quick, restless eye, within whose depths slumbered a world of thought, feeling, and will, spoke of a wasting activity of mind. His right temple was disfigured by a scar; but genius sat enthroned on his brow, over which brooded masses of raven curls. The contour of his mouth and chin breathed energy and decision;

while the elevated character of the whole face, and its ceaseless and rapid change of expression, were indicative of a soul lofty in its purposes, unbending in its resolves, unexhausted by effort, and undepressed by difficulty. A temper so bold, ardent, and cheerful; a brain so fertile in resources; combined with a profound knowledge of the military tactics which, founded on the practice of the greatest generals, and supported by Rome's iron legions, had made the imperial soldiery the terror of the world, all rendered Orestes worthy of his high station, as the representative of the greatest empire of the ancient world. During the eight years he had governed Damascus, many useful reforms had been effected in her state: the walls and fortifications had been carefully repaired, the garrison kept under severe but necessary discipline, and the magazines well supplied with the superb and far-famed Damascus arms. A civil as well as military chief, he had removed oppressive taxes, by which former exacting rulers had supported luxurious modes of living and a splendor becoming the emperor himself; insured security to life and property by his vigilance in detecting and punishing the violators of law and order; in short, he had won the confidence and affection of those he governed, by his justice, humanity, and ability. Kept constantly informed of the state of the surrounding country by swift couriers who traversed it in every direction, and of remote regions by the reports of the numerous caravans arriving from the south and east, the warlike movement of the Moslems had not escaped his notice. With the rapid intuition of genius, Orestes instantly conceived that Damascus would attract the Arab; its religion, its central position, its wealth, all were so many allurements to the Moslem, who, while he fought for "God and Mahomet," would by no means scorn the wealth that the plunder of a rich city would pour into his coffers. Hastily assembling his councillors, the Governor communicated the intelligence he had received and his conviction of the necessity for prompt action. They deemed him hasty in his conclusions, and guarded him against rashness. Unconvinced by their arguments, and sickened by their indifference, he turned from the council-chamber, and sought the Patriarch. Cyril instantly comprehended the danger, listened to the plans of Orestes, and encouraged him to pursue the course his own judgment should dictate. "Go forward, my son," said the venerable priest, "in the path you are pursuing, and Heaven will bless your noble efforts. We serve the

God of battles, who giveth not the victory to the strong. We will repose in His almighty power, and all will yet be well. Let us to Hypatia." So saying, he laid his arm within that of his companion, and they passed on in silence. Both hearts were absorbed by the emotions that beloved name had stirred.

CHAPTER IV.

Thou hast discovered some enchantment old,
Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I slept,
And mingled it with thine.—SHELLEY.

THE last rays of the setting sun had faded from turret and spire. Far away in the distance, the dim outline of Lebanon lay in deepening gloom. The glorious twilight of Syria's delicious clime had melted into shadowy darkness. One by one, those glittering orbs that make night's brow so regal had stolen out upon the azure deep of heaven, till the blue concave seemed one vast dome, hieroglyphicked in characters of living light. "Glorious types of the Eternal! whose gorgeous magnificence imagination could ne'er have conceived; compared with whose stupendous cycles all time is but the exhalation of a breath; whose divinest harmonies thrill the universe; to whose boundless succession and infinite number philosophy affixes no limit; whose Author is God! What sublimest truths are emblazoned on your burning heraldry! The soul yearns to adore; and if, in its upward flight, it passed not from the glorious creation to the infinitely more glorious Creator, surely it would fold itself with an idolatrous faith around your beauteous orbs!"

So mused Hypatia, as, gazing from her window, she awaited the coming of the loved. "My father is late to-night, and Orestes comes not," she said, as she descended to the softly lighted veranda, where was prepared the simple evening meal of milk and fruits. With her own hand, she prepared her father's favorite beverage of snow mingled with the juice of the delicious grape that flourishes in the fertile vales of Syria; she ordered the refreshing bath, so necessary in eastern climes; she anticipated every want, provided every comfort her affectionate heart could suggest.

A step without, and she springs to meet her father. Her arm is thrown caressingly around him, while her lips are pressed to his. "My father!" in tones of thrilling tenderness, "and the noble Orestes," turning to her lover with kind greeting, "you are right welcome."

The slight repast was not finished before Hypatia had discovered the shadow upon the

spirit of her companions. "You are sad to-night," she said. "I will bring my lute, and sing your favorite songs." She returned immediately, and, seating herself upon a cushion at her father's feet, preluded a soft strain, which gradually swelled into power; while, as if her spirit had bathed itself in theirs, she sang:—

"Of old, Isaiah's burning tongue
This word of hope o'er Israel sung,
And through all time the echo's rung—
'He will save us! He will save us!'

"'Twas in the hour of helpless fear,
Hemm'd in by rude Assyrian spear,
That Judah wept with joy to hear—
'He will save us! He will save us!'

"Start not, my soul, though storms rage high,
And angry lightnings rend the sky;
Attend the prophet's joyful cry—
'He will save us! He will save us!'

"In adversity's dark night,
When fearfully we walk by sight,
The promise comes, and with it light—
'He will save us! He will save us!'

The animated strain, breathing sublimest trust, sunk into the hearts of the listeners. Cyril turned his bright and tearful eyes upon Orestes, who seemed absorbed in intense admiration of the pure being so radiant with hope.

The song ended, Cyril raised Hypatia, and, placing her upon a seat beside him, recounted what has been already related. She listened with breathless interest; comprehended and appreciated the difficulties and dangers of Orestes' position; and a deeper admiration of the genius that inspired him seized upon her mind, and deepened the idolatrous devotion she had long cherished in her heart. "And now, my daughter," continued Cyril, "you are young and beautiful. I may not survive the dangers that threaten us." A convulsive shudder passed over her as she sunk into his arms. His voice grew tremulous with emotion as he proceeded: "The noble Orestes, who has long ardently loved you, who is in every way worthy of my child, has to-day conjured me to give him a right to protect you, if it should please Heaven to remove me. I leave you, my daughter, to reply." He pressed her tenderly to his heart, and withdrew.

Orestes was at her feet. "Speak to me, dearest Hypatia! say that I may yet call you mine, and the devotion of my life shall reward you!"

She moved not. He seized her hand, and pressed it passionately to his lips. A hot tear fell upon it. A thrill of rapture shot to her heart. *This for me!* she sighed, as, trembling

with excessive emotion, she buried her head on his shoulder.

"Mine! mine!" he fervently murmured, as, softly encircling her with his arm, he drew her to his heart and imprinted upon her lips the holy kiss that sealed their betrothal.

"Linked in the inwoven charm
Of converse sweet and deep—talk
That might disarm time,"

the hours sped by unheeded, and the last faint star had melted into the dawn before Orestes withdrew. His words of tenderness still lingered on her ear; her hand was still warm from the pressure of his; his tones had sunk into her soul, and while the bright future he had depicted with love's peculiar eloquence was vividly present to her imagination, a shadow stole over her brow, and a chill crept to her heart as the recollection of approaching danger returned, mingled with a dim foreboding that these bright dreams might never be realized. "If Orestes perish," she exclaimed, with impassioned heroism, "Hypatia dies!" How prophetic is love!

CHAPTER V.

Hark to that roar, whose swift and deafening peals
In countless echoes through the mountains ring,
Startling pale midnight on her starry throne!

SHELLY.

IN pursuance of his determination, Orestes immediately commenced those active operations so necessary at this juncture. And though he met much opposition from those who contended that a certainty of invasion could alone justify his measures, the high soul of the noble governor swerved not from its purpose. The troops were reviewed, the engines of war put in order, large bands of citizens were put under arms, the inhabitants of the surrounding plains were ordered to remove within the walls, the granaries were stored with vast quantities of grain—Damascus was prepared for a siege. Events proved how unerring are the decisions of genius. These preparations were scarcely completed, when a band of fugitives, flying before the advancing Moslems, sought refuge in the city. And now dismay was on every countenance. Every breath of censure was hushed, and "Orestes is our only hope!" broke spontaneously from every lip. Elevated by a consciousness of his transcendent ability, burning with desire successfully to vindicate the Roman arms and the truth of Christianity against the heathen, his whole soul stirred by the thought that it was the city and the home of Hypatia

he was to defend, if need be, with his life-blood, Orestes seemed an inspired hero. Conscious, at the same time, that Damascus might be overpowered by the vast numbers of the enemy, or by a long siege might be starved into capitulation, he sent to implore aid from the Emperor, and from the neighboring cities. From all he received unfavorable answers. Hieropolis, Aleppo, Jerusalem, all stood in the same critical juncture, and the Emperor, Heraclius, defending his capital from the Persians on the east and the barbarians on the west, could not afford sufficient assistance to save Syria from the desolating Moslem.

Orestes had taken every precaution to prevent surprise. Night after night he traversed the battlements. "Die, but never be unfaithful!" were his impressive words to the sentinels, and they felt that death were preferable to dishonor. Often he sought the house of Hypatia, where the soft endearments of love made him, for a time, forgetful of his cares. Returning late one night, he determined again to visit the citadel before retiring for a few hours. Gazing vacantly over the plain, his mind absorbed in intense thought, he fancied he perceived a glancing, as of the moonbeams, which were remarkably brilliant, from polished points. He called the attention of the sentinels. The objects, whatever they might be, were certainly in motion. Orestes sprang from the wall, and applying his ear to the earth distinctly heard the low tramp of the advancing host. The Arab was stealing cautiously upon his prey; he dreamed not that the sleepless lion was watching his muffled approach.

And now, lights flash from turret to tower; torches blaze in the streets; soldiers hastily arm; the trumpet's clang rouses the citizen; the walls are manned; vast engines stand prepared to discharge their destructive missiles on the advancing foe. The Arabs, perceiving that their march had been discovered, came down upon the devoted city with a shock like thunder. A tremendous discharge of arrows and stones drove them for an instant backward. But thousands poured upon the plain. Borne on their fleet chargers, they came like light. Clouds of javelins darkened the air. High above the din and roar of the assault, rose the fierce battle-cry of "God and Mahomet!" The Roman eagle soared proudly over the towers of Damascus, and seemed to hurl defiance at the pale crescent that glittered in the moonbeams.

Orestes moved among the brave defenders of the walls, the foremost at every post of danger. Distinguished by his dress and flowing plumes,

a thousand arrows fell harmlessly beside him. Did he bear a charmed life?

The ponderous battering-rams were now directed against the gates. The thunder of their crash shook the walls to their foundation. But, at this crisis, a sally, led on by Orestes, was made with such desperate courage that the foe abandoned their engines and hastily retreated, leaving the plain strewn with slaughtered heaps. The besieged employed the interval thus afforded them in removing their dead and wounded. Many a brave soldier had fallen, and the walls were slippery with blood. Suppressing all exhibition of feeling, Orestes moved in every direction, encouraging, animating, and rousing. "Brave men," he cried, "you have battled nobly for your altars and hearth-stones! Trust me, the God whose cause we maintain against these infidel invaders will never leave us to perish!" His lofty enthusiasm inspired them, and they shouted "Never!"

The venerable Cyril moved through the city, a ministering angel. He wept with and comforted those whose fathers, brothers, and sons had fallen. He visited the wounded, poured the healing balm into their wounds, and with his own hands administered the reviving cordial. Hourly he prayed that God would succor his people, and save Damascus.

CHAPTER VI.

Art and eloquence,

And all the shows of the world are frail and vain,
To weep a loss that turns their light to shade.

It is a woe too deep for tears, when *all*
Is rest at once.—SHELLEY.

WITH the dawn, the attack was renewed. But why detail the eventful siege of Damascus? A bloody page of history records it. Suffice it to say that it continued seven months, during which time, all that genius could devise, policy suggest, or courage execute, was done to save the city. Finding the walls crumbling before the destructive battering-rams, the best and bravest of the citizens and soldiers wounded or slain, the provisions rapidly failing, Orestes was forced to yield. Had he thought alone of himself, he would have maintained the conflict while life remained, or one stone clung to another. But it was cruel to fling away life while there existed no hope of attaining that for which it had been already so lavishly expended. His heart bled as he looked sorrowfully upon the gory dead, whose mangled remains lay scattered upon the sod they had baptized with their blood.

The crescent displaced the cross. Damascus capitulated.

The Arabs, exalted to the last pitch of frenzy by the long and obstinate resistance, poured into the city, and the work of devastation commenced. A numerous band, headed by Obeidah, approached the magnificent temple. Here a company of Christians had assembled; and, while death and destruction raged around, Cyril performed a solemn service. The lofty chant swelled upon the air, and for a brief space arrested the desolating work that approached the consecrated spot. Attracted by so remarkable a sound, Obeidah and his chiefs rushed into the temple. The wild cry was hushed, and a feeling of awe crept over the rude Moslems as they gazed upon the inspired form of the Patriarch, towering aloft, and the reverent groups bowed around in attitudes of deepest devotion.

We have before said that Obeidah was not altogether a savage. Touched by this scene, so morally grand, he granted the Christians permission to retire from the city. Three days were allowed them to accomplish their retreat. Grateful for this unexpected clemency, their arrangements were speedily completed, and, under the direction of Cyril, who was accompanied by Hypatia, they commenced a toilsome march towards the mountains. What pen may portray the feelings of those exiles? "Damascus! O Damascus!" was the wailing lament that seemed crushed out of every heart, as they looked their last farewell. It was the city of their fathers. Here, they and their children had been born. Love had consecrated, friendship had endeared, and grief had made it sacred. The heart clings fondly to the scenes of former joys, but with what wild tenacity does it bind itself to the spot hallowed by our griefs! They left behind them—O grief beyond compare!—the ashes of their dead. And now, the golden moon flooded every spire and dome with surpassing splendor, as in mockery of the agony that was wringing out life. Among these devoted sufferers were many delicate women and fair young children. The aged, too, were there, bending beneath the weight of years and sorrows. Privations, toils, and hardships were before them; but they girded themselves, and went forward in the strength of God.

The character of Hypatia now exhibited itself in its loveliest phase. Though her heart was torn by this violent separation from Orestes, and racked with anxiety as to his fate, she buried her sufferings deep in her heart, and endeavored to animate those who were sinking

under what they had already endured, or what they anticipated. To Cyril, her devotion was untiring. She walked beside him, and, with her weak arms, sought to support his trembling steps. She beguiled the wearisomeness of the way by repeating, in silvery tones, those sublime odes in which the prophet-bard and king of Israel has poured forth the raptures of inspiration. And when the weary pilgrim reposed beneath the shade of the wide-spreading palms, she brought the cooling waters to relieve his thirst and refresh his blistered feet. Her arm pillowed his head when he slept; her smile greeted him when he awoke. Absorbed with cares for her father, and her mind occupied by one dear image, the heroic girl forgot herself, and heeded not the fatigues of the way. Cyril gazed at her through gathering tears; and, as he felt his strength departing, prayed with impassioned earnestness that God would shield Hypatia. The very soul of tenderness breathed in the soft tones in which he addressed her, and the mournful glances with which he regarded her. "My daughter!" She started. The eye may burn eloquently with love, the pressure of a beloved hand may thrill the soul, but oh, the *tone* has deeper power than these! It sunk into her heart. She felt all that he could not say, and she wept upon his bosom.

CHAPTER VII.

Thy touch may stamp these limbs with crime,
These brows thy branding garlands bear;
But the free heart, the impassive soul,
Scorn thy control!—SHELLEY.

In the mean time, Orestes and his chief officers had been loaded with chains, and thrown into the dungeons of the citadel they had so bravely defended. Obeidah, with wise policy, had spared their lives, in opposition to the wishes of Caled, who urged their violent and immediate death. Orestes strode the narrow confines of his prison with the air of a victorious chieftain. All had been done, within the power of mortals, to save Damascus; and this lofty conviction sustained his soul, though all was dark around. But the future! oh, what was hidden by its impenetrable veil? Hypatia! Had she become the prey of the spoiler? There was madness in the thought! Exhausted by violent emotions, and suffering from unhealed wounds, the noble captain threw himself upon the floor of his prison, and gave himself up, by turns, to the most agonizing fears and the brightest dreams his vivid imagination could conjure. He could not know how soon

Hypatia and himself were to be reunited—forever!

Caled, whose hyena-like appetite for carnage was unsatiated, though blood lay in pools around him; cursing the humanity of his colleague, that had allowed the Christians to escape, conceived in his most wicked heart a scheme of cruelty worthy of a demon. This was no other than to pursue and cut off the retreating Christians. Concealing his purpose from Obeidah, he left the city, at the head of a party of the fiercest Arabs, mounted on the fleetest barbs of the desert. He was guided by a wretch who, for gold, had apostatized from his faith, and betrayed the route of his brethren.

"O for a tongue to curse the slave!
May life's unblest cup for him
Be drugg'd with treacheries to the brim!"

It was the fourth evening since they had left Damascus, and the little band of pilgrims had entered the hilly country. They had selected for the night's repose a lovely vale, watered by a pure stream. High on either side rose the verdant hills, crowned with luxuriant vegetation. The emerald turf was to be their couch, and the blue concave their canopy. Their simple repast was finished, and they were engaged in their evening devotions. In Jeremiah's mournful Lamentation, they had bewailed their desolation; and from Isaiah's consolatory strain, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God," they had received consolation; the spirit of prayer was upon them, and the holy hush was unbroken save by the murmur of the water and the whisper of the breeze. The silence became, for an instant, breathless, as the rushing of steeds and the ringing of steel, blent with the startling war-cry, broke on the still air. The young men sprang to their feet and grasped their swords; but they were few in number, and were trampled down and swept away like leaves in the torrent. Gentle women and helpless children; the brave youth and the hoary grand-sire; the venerable matron and the tender maiden—all, all were savagely butchered. Hypatia alone was saved. Clasped in the arms of Cyril, she had swooned with terror as the savage Caled, all reeking with blood, rushed upon the Patriarch. Struck with the rare beauty of the maiden, he tore her away, and, unmoved by the piteous cries that were wrung from the father's heart by the fate of his child, he plunged his sword into the body of the holy man. Just Heaven! is there no avenging bolt for so monstrous a crime?

No veil of darkness gathered over the gory

scene; nature smiled lovely as before. The streamlet danced musically on, though its waters were red with the warm blood of the true-hearted and brave; the perfume-laden breeze sported caressingly with the light leaves; the moon shed her white radiance over the valley of the dead, and, by her light, the fiendlike actors in this bloody drama retraced their steps towards Damascus.

The rapid movement aroused Hypatia, and, starting from the litter on which she was borne, she cast a terrified glance around. As her eye fell upon the forms that surrounded her, a conviction of the terrible truth rushed upon her mind. "My father!" died upon her pallid lips, and she relapsed into insensibility. Caled was beside her. The inanimate form, so beautiful in its graceful outlines, so touching in its deathlike repose, might have awakened a feeling of remorse for his last ruthless deed, for he softly touched her hand. It was icy cold. A tender and merciful nature seemed born within him. "She must not die!" broke from his lips. And, shouting "On! on!" to his troops, he pressed rapidly towards Damascus. Its spires soon rose to view. The party halted for a brief space, and refreshments were offered to Hypatia; but she turned shudderingly away from the proffered food. Again she entered Damascus; and, though her heart was frozen with grief and terror, one chord of intensest feeling still vibrated in her soul; hope whispered that Orestes lived, that he would save her from the Moslem.

She was conducted with gentle care to a suite of apartments, magnificently furnished, in the citadel of Damascus. Caled had conceived for Hypatia a violent passion, and he fondly dreamed that he would win her love, and make her the queen of his harem. He surrounded her with costly luxuries; all that Damascus could yield of rich and rare to delight the taste and please the fancy was lavished at her feet. In immediate attendance upon her, he placed a favorite slave. Beautiful as the day, Zoë might have contended the palm with Hypatia; but hers was that dark, restless beauty peculiar to the Arab maid; it lacked the soft repose, the gentle majesty that made Hypatia so attractive.

Zoë could love idolatrously, and her facile and plastic soul attached itself readily and passionately. The grief of Hypatia excited all her sympathy, and her loveliness won her heart. Henceforth, there was no service she would not have undertaken, no danger she would not have hazarded to serve her mistress.

Caled wisely allowed some days to elapse

before he visited his prisoner. His motive was twofold—to allow the first poignancy of grief to subside (how transforming is love!), and he hoped that the impression of his person, if she had distinguished it on the night they had met, would be confused with that of others, and so he not be recognized as the immediate author of her misfortunes. Informed by Zoë of every alternation of feeling, he found her with a calm serenity upon her brow that added tenfold to her beauty. Courteously greeting her after the fashion of the East, he said:—

“Gentle maiden, though a captive, methought thou hast not found this confinement irksome, or thy guard a stern one. I have sought to soften the hours by the companionship of my sweet Zoë, and by such poor amusements as I have been able to supply.”

She bowed her head coldly, and remained silent.

“Say, fairest Hypatia (so methinks thou art called)—nay, frown not—I am Caled; men call me ‘The Sword of God.’ I may yet wear a crown. One smile will make thee queen of my harem. Be mine, and a diadem shall yet encircle thy radiant brow. The spoils of conquered kingdoms I will lay at thy feet, my splendid name, my victorious sword—all, all! Canst thou scorn the love of Caled?”

The form of Hypatia dilated proudly, and an indignant blush crimsoned her pallid cheek. “Know, proud man,” she exclaimed with lofty tone and air, “that a Christian maiden aspires to *undivided* sway in *one* heart. She knows but one love; and if death tears away the object of her idolatry, she dies, or lives but to cherish the memory of the lost, and to anticipate an immortal union in a brighter world. Love like this *thou* canst not comprehend. Leave me. Persuasions are vain; allurements dazzle me not!”

A frown gathered darkly on his brow as he replied: “Maiden, I have stooped to entreat; remember thou art in my power. But”—and his tone grew softer, as he saw her terrified glance—“though my captive, I would fain be *thy* slave. What wish of thine, loveliest Hypatia, may Caled fulfil?”

“I am a captive,” she murmured; “I may not command. But canst thou tell me”—and her eye grew dim—“if my father perished on that awful night that brought me hither?”

A quick flush shot over the brow of the Arab. A light flashed upon her memory. The form whose aspect had so terrified, so dimly seen through that night of tranced horror, was surely his who now knelt before her. She awaited not his reply; but, springing to the opposite

side of the room, she clasped her hands over her eyes, as if to shut out the blasting sight, while from her bloodless lips broke a low cry of anguish.

Caled moved towards her; but she waved him back with a gesture of imperious command.

“Approach me not!” she vehemently exclaimed. “There is blood on thy hand! O God! it is my father’s!”

Resigning her to the care of Zoë, Caled retired, vexed and irritated at the result of this, his first interview. Day after day he renewed his visits with no better success.

At length, the calls of war roused him from his inactivity. Already the chieftains murmured at a delay which might ruin the Moslem enterprise. Caled tore himself from Damascus, indulging the delusive hope that when he should return the conqueror of Syria the pride of Hypatia would yield. He could not enter into her heart, nor conceive the loathing with which she regarded him.

CHAPTER VIII.

“One life, one death,
One heaven, one immortality.”—SHELLEY.

Six days had now elapsed since the departure of Caled. Hypatia, relieved of the terror his presence inspired, had yielded herself not unwillingly to the ministrations of Zoë, who sought perpetually to amuse her. She recounted the history of her early life; spoke of her home, far away in the south of Arabia; related with touching simplicity the story of her early love, and how her brave warrior had fallen in battle; but, seeing the tears in the eyes of her sympathizing mistress, she quickly sprung up, and, seizing her lute, struck its chords to a lively air, and, banishing every trace from her own brow, strove to restore the smile to the lips of Hypatia.

As the sun declined from his meridian heat, they contemplated with pleasing emotion the lovely landscape. True, the sad wrecks of war strewed the plain, but beyond were the blue mountains and the golden sky, all gorgeous with the pomp of descending day. At this hour Hypatia’s thoughts became so absorbed that Zoë sat motionless at her feet or lingered silently beside her, apparently partaking her abstraction. This was the time she had wandered with Orestes, and she lived over again the dear delights that were fled. Could it be imagination that conjured the form that appeared before her bewildered gaze, slowly tra-

versing the battlement? She clasped her hands forcibly to her heart to still its tumultuous beatings; and, uttering the name of "Orestes," she sprang forward; her temple struck against the lattice, and she fell back bleeding and insensible into the arms of Zoë.

That voice had reached the ear of Orestes; and, low as it was, it echoed through his soul. Flinging off the guard, he rushed to the window; and, with giant strength, tearing away the lattice, he leaped into the room, and knelt beside the insensible girl. He clasped her in his arms; he called her by every endearing name; he pressed his lips to hers; he bathed her brow with the restoratives the affrighted Zoë supplied. "Dearest Hypatia!" His voice seemed to recall animation, and, slowly opening her eyes, she fixed them on Orestes with a gaze of unutterable love. Such moments of concentrated rapture on the verge of despair, like the beautiful verdure that girdles the deceitful volcano, promising repose, tell oftentimes of the fiery tempest that is gathering below. A thousand mutual revelations were made; a thousand vows of constancy were repeated, though these were all unneeded by hearts like theirs. Orestes was forced away; but life from that hour recommenced. To communicate daily with each other, and, if possible, to concert a plan of escape, now appeared easy. Zoë was the willing instrument of Hypatia's pleasure, and the Arab who guarded Orestes, already committed by what he had at first allowed, was easily won by a bribe of valuable jewels; and, as his orders permitted his prisoner to walk daily upon the battlements, he readily connived at the meetings of the lovers.

How impatiently they watched the lagging sun! They lived but for one hour—that which restored them to each other. This very perfection of passion was in itself prophetic of sudden and rapid change, as the thunder-cloud is born of the glory of the summer sky; as the perfect maturity of the flower marks the commencement of the insidious decay. So it is with all things earthly! But, as the fading flower bears in its bosom a living germ that shall bud and blossom in new beauty, so love bears within itself the principle of immortal life.

It was impossible that Caled should long remain in ignorance of what was transpiring in Damascus. A trusty messenger, who had watched the movements of Orestes and Hypatia, brought him the intelligence of their stolen interviews at the twilight hour, just at the moment that Aleppo had surrendered to the victorious Moslems. Burning with rage, he

sped back to Damascus, determined that Orestes should perish. His prisoner his rival. His blood boiled at the thought. "This," said he, "is what the maiden meant when she spoke so proudly of *one* love. Fool that I was to persuade her! But," he impiously exclaimed, "the 'Sword of God' is not easily turned aside! I will be avenged on this Orestes!"

He reached Damascus late in the afternoon, and fearing that his plan of surprising Orestes might be defeated, if the intelligence of his arrival spread through the citadel, he entered by a secret passage, and without waiting to lay aside his armor, or to take refreshment, he rushed to the apartments of Hypatia, and, bursting the door violently open, strode haughtily into the centre of the room. Orestes, supporting on his arm the terrified Hypatia, and seeking to shield her from the savage whom fury had transformed into a demon, confronted Caled with unblenching courage. But, unarmed and manacled, the odds were fearfully against him. As he stooped, for an instant, to assure the trembling girl, the sword of Caled entered his back and penetrated to his heart. With a groan, he sank upon the floor. A shriek of such thrilling anguish rung through the chamber as startled even the cold-blooded murderer. Hypatia clung to the dying Orestes in convulsive agony. He turned upon her his fast closing eyes, still bright with undying love; his lips breathed her beloved name, and the soul of the noble Orestes was gone. She still knelt beside him, when Caled, turning to Zoë, who had been the stupefied witness of the horrible scene, ordered her to remove her mistress. The trembling girl gently took the hand of Hypatia, and a shudder passed over her at its deadly coldness. She passed her arm around the beloved form, but it yielded not to the soft pressure. Rigid death enchainéd it. The faithful heart was broken, and so were fulfilled love's prophetic words: "If Orestes perish, Hypatia dies."

With a gesture of despair, Zoë threw herself at the feet of Caled, and conjured him to plunge his dagger to her heart. But his revenge had already overleaped itself, and he turned bitterly away. That night, the true-hearted girl fled from Damascus; no tidings of her were ever heard.

Syria bowed to the Mahometan yoke. Damascus became the seat of a mighty caliphate, and among the most renowned of the chieftains who bore the banner of the great Prophet to the far east and the remote west was Caled, "The Sword of God." But, for the honor of humanity, let us hope that, on the lap of fame

**and in the midst of his magnificence, his heart
was sometimes visited with remorseful com-
punctions for his many crimes, not the least of
which was the cruel fate of Orestes and Hypatia.**

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SPRING WINDS.

BY ALICE B. HAVEN.

(Continued from page 240.)

CHAPTER III.

Young trees root the faster for shaking.—BOGATSKY.

July 1st.

I MUST write down Mrs. Waldron's rules before I forget them, for I believe they will be a great help to me. We had a little precious bit of a talk last night, when we walked down there to choose some bedding plants which Mr. Waldron was so good as to offer Laura and myself. We have cleared away most of the weeds, not with a "kitchen knife," however. Papa surprised us with a lovely little set of English garden tools, and, what was kinder still, came out of his study and rooted out all the dock and plantain, things that were altogether too hard for us. He trimmed off the great clumps of balm and phlox, so that they are quite ornamental now; and some exquisite white lilies have opened on what we thought were only those blue weedy "flower de luce," as Ellen, our cook, calls them.

The roses are in full bloom, the season being so late, and the garden so shaded; many of them seem to be quite excellent varieties. I never saw a little creature so fond of flowers as Lily is. They keep her quiet by the hour, the Columbines and "Marguerites"—as I prefer to call the "white weed" that grows so profusely in the back garden—clover tops and "widow's tears," everything in the shape of a blossom that she can lay her little hands on, snapped off close up on the stem, of course. She trots about with them, and presents them to me at the most inconvenient seasons, when I am stitching away for dear life, or with my hands all red and dripping with currant juice, preparing fruit for the table. We have been great friends ever since the night I put her to bed. I try not to *drive* her away from me, if I am ever so busy, but listen to her little troubles, and settle her disputes with Morton at once, not allowing him to impose upon her because he is a boy and the oldest.

I find I do not lose so much time after all, for, sometimes, they are quiet by the hour, Lily with her flowers and a doll, and Morton digging away, in imitation of Laura and myself, with a kitchen shovel borrowed from Ellen, who is unfailingly good natured to both of them. They

are both as well as possible, and papa seems better; he coughs less, and has lost that weary-looking expression that distressed me so all winter. He takes a day now and then, for the worst of his business cares are over, I imagine, though it will be fully a year before all is settled. He has worked in the back garden as well as the front borders since the tools came out, cleaned up the paths, and the rank growth from around the currant and raspberry bushes. We shall have a good supply of fruit from both. Ellen and I made some *lovely* gooseberry pies to-day! I must not forget that! My first pies! studied out of a cook-book, and made through many misgivings, and much weariness to the flesh. My arm aches yet with the rolling, and pounding in the butter; but papa will open his eyes, and they are Arthur's favorite dessert.

It is *such* a comfort to me that Arthur has taken a fancy to the Waldrons. The boats were the first thing that took him there; they have a pretty little yacht—"the Angelé"—besides the row boat, and invite Arthur very cordially to go with them. Their influence is so good; I can see it already on Arthur. He was always afraid to speak disrespectfully to papa, but now he seems really attentive, just as Ralph and his brother are to Mr. Waldron, and is positively brotherly to Laura and myself for the first time in his life.

When we said last night that Mr. Waldron had offered us some bedding plants, as it was too late to do anything else with the garden this year, he proposed, quite of his own accord, to walk there with us. Papa looked over his *Evening Post* in astonishment! We had a lovely walk; it did not seem half so far as it did the first time; and Angelé saw us coming, and met us way down the avenue. She and Ralph walked part way back. They are special friends and confidants.

It was after Dixon, the gardener, had set aside the pink and scarlet geraniums, the heliotropes, and petunias we are to have, that I had my talk with Mrs. Waldron. She was in her own room, and sent for me; her dressing-room, I should have said. It reminded me of the oratories we read about, in the castles and palaces in old times. The walls were hung

with Overbeck's illustrations, and my own favorite "Christus Consolator," which was why Angelé noticed it at our house the first call she made. A little vase of cut flowers stood in the middle of the table, and around it were laid devotional books, some like mamma's. Poor mamma! I think she would have liked Mrs. Waldron so very, very much! Mrs. Waldron says that when I am further advanced I shall like these books, but that I want the simplest instruction now, "like a child in the spelling-book," she said.

I told her how much lighter things had seemed the last few days, only that I could not help getting hurried and irritable, and so tired that I *had* to go to bed in the afternoon, and lost so much time, and got up so cross. She asked me if I liked mottoes, and took a little book-mark from her "Keble" and gave me—

"Haste Not, Rest Not."

She said the true way to accomplish a great deal was never to be in a hurry about anything, and to be willing to lay aside one duty the instant another required us. She read me something from the "Life of Mrs. Schemilpeninck," a new book she had just received, about routine—that everybody who had been very successful or useful in life had accomplished it by routine; that is, rightly dividing life, so that every duty had its proper place.

I had confessed that working in the garden had so fascinated me that I disliked to go in to my sewing, and that when I commenced practising, or had taken up a German book, and the children worried and bothered me, it made me fly out and send them off crying and complaining to Ellen. So she read me some rules from a life of Mrs. Fry, and afterwards lent me the book, asking me to read it instead of "Guy Livingstone," which she said would do Arthur more good than it would me. Now for my rules:—

1. Never to lose any time.

I do not think that lost which is spent in amusement or recreation; to devote a portion of every day to this, but always be in the habit of being employed.

2. Never err the least in truth.

3. Never say an ill thing of a person when thou canst say a good thing of him; *not only to speak charitably, but to feel so.*

4. Never be irritable or unkind to anybody.

5. Never indulge thyself in luxuries that are not necessary.

6. Do all things with consideration; and

when thy path to act right is most difficult, feel confidence in that Power alone which is able to assist thee, *and exert thine own powers, so far as they go.*

Mrs. Waldron drew a pencil under the last sentence. She said that people talked a great deal about "relying on Providence," and then wondered they were not helped, when they had not put forth an effort. "We are to remember to exert our own powers so far as they go."

July 6th.

We have a new member added to the family, a gentle, snow white cow; the children both call her "Snowdrop."

No one can tell the comfort she is, and the help the milk and butter will be, for Ellen can make butter; we have two beautiful golden pats put away to surprise papa with. The cow was all Ellen's idea, and I bought it, or paid for it. Papa gave me permission to sell the diamond ring Mrs. Gardiner gave me when I was sixteen. He always said it was "a piece of foolishness." I confess I did not like to think of selling it, but when Mrs. Phelps said the other night that all papa wanted was plenty of good milk, and butter, and cream, and Ellen happened to say, the next morning, "what an illegant barn the stable would make, and there ought to be a cow in it that very minute," my ring flashed into my mind, and I made myself give it up. How proud I was when I first had it! I remember taking off my glove in the omnibus to show it, and wearing it *outside my glove* examination day! as if it would be noticed. What a little fool I was! about more things than one, for that matter. I used to imagine I was fond of Joe Bloodgood just about that time, and now he seems so coarse and so silly, to me, as I look back at him. I don't believe he has two ideas except horses and wine parties. So different from—well, from young men that read, and stay at home *one evening* in the week.

July 8th.

I have actually made two dozen glasses of currant jelly! I don't believe I was ever so proud of anything in all my life before, not even of the cow, when I went out and held a light so Arthur could see her, after he came home that night!

And then to see papa eat those famous light rolls I have taught Ellen to make, and that great saucer of raspberries and cream, and his coffee as yellow as gold! It has been a delightful day, tired as I am! The butter, and

cream, and milk, and fruit help my market money along amazingly, particularly as papa says, since I paid for the cow, he would pay for the pasture; so there is the five dollars a month I used to spend for the milk all clear.

Drawbacks. Cross to the children when they come to learn their letters. Lily so obstinate, and Morton so full of play! How I pity people that have to teach A B C schools! they earn all they are paid.

Had a tiff with Arthur about keeping his room so untidy, when I had made such special resolutions to be a good sister, and when I can see for myself how much a kind word and little attention will do for him. But Mrs. Phelps—she is a friend of the Waldrons—had brought another lady, Mrs. Lane, to see us, and Ellen had left the door of Arthur's "den" open, and they had to pass directly by. If I was not afraid to sleep down stairs, I would change with him.

July 18th.

I must acknowledge that I have felt very uneasy about making so many new acquaintances lately. It was very kind in Mrs. Waldron to bring them, and in them to ask me to join the "Dorcas" society, which meets once a week to sew for the poor; so that I begin to feel quite at home here, and Laura has found a number of companions near her own age. But when I came to think of it, how was I ever going to keep them up, without so much as a vehicle for a single horse, or "so much as a horseshoe in the family," as Arthur said? Papa told me I could hire the hack at the livery stable, a shabby old thing, and every one knows what it is, too. I did not know I had so much pride remaining; but when I thought of our elegant close carriage, and the *coupée*, and all, I could not help feeling badly. I know that it was wicked, though, when God still gave us all we really needed, and such kind, kind friends, and I tried to get over it.

Now all is right. Dr. Clarke has said so much to papa about riding on horseback—he told him it was an expense as necessary as his food and clothes—that he has bought back Arthur's old pet, "Jenny." Poor Arthur! I did not realize how hard it must have been to part with her till to-night when I came home with Angelé, and the children met us at the gate, and shouted the news. We ran directly to the stable, Angelé and I. There was poor Arthur, in his linen duster, just out of the cars, with his arm over her, and his cheek laid up against "Jen-

ny's" neck. He started up fast enough, but his voice sounded "a little shaky," as he would have said himself.

August 15th.

It is almost a month since I have written a line in my journal, I hardly know why, except that I have been very busy and very happy, all the happier because I was busy, I suppose. When I look back at my idle, useless life last winter, it frightens me. No wonder I was so unhappy! I think I can write for myself the verse that I felt so in the psalm yesterday—"Before I was afflicted, I went wrong;" I wish I could say as truly—"but now have I kept Thy word." I *do try*. Still it frightens me to think of Confirmation—there is to be one the first of next month, and there was a notice of it given yesterday in church. I was up in the choir, for the first time; Mr. Allen, who usually plays the organ, is taking a summer journey, and his wife is with him; so Angelé was asked to take Mrs. Allen's place, and she wished me to go up with her. It was in the afternoon; they did not get along very well in the morning, and wanted more help. I was so surprised to find Mr. Ralph Waldron seated before the organ, and he welcomed me so pleasantly! He had already commenced the voluntary, but he looked up and smiled.

How rich and deep that voluntary was! He plays far better than Mr. Allen, so much more feeling, and more devotional music. Mr. Allen gives us quite too much of "Lucia" and "Favorita." I shut my eyes, and put my head down to listen. Everything seemed so quiet and peaceful! The congregation was small—it always is in the afternoon—and the little church is so beautifully shaded; Mr. Brooks, our rector, made up the picture, in his flowing white robes, as he came and stood by the lecturn; and then that heavenly music, rising, throbbing, dying away in such deep, sighing chords! I love the organ more and more. Ralph said so truly, last night, it seems like a foreshadowing of the vast harmonies of heaven, lent to us, as the flowers are, symbols of the beauty and happiness to be.

What a long, long talk we had!

But to go back to the Confirmation. It startled me when the notice was given out; I can scarcely say why, for it never seemed to have anything to do with me before. When Mr. Brooks was urging it yesterday, I felt in my heart that I ought to think of it, and when I turned, perhaps I looked agitated, for I felt so; Ralph was looking directly at me, with a

strange, grave, questioning look, as if he read what was in my mind.

When we were coming home, he walked with me, for both carriages were full (they have visitors), and we did not talk much until we were almost home; and he said, as we reached the gate—"Won't you ask me in, and let me explain this to you?"

We had just begun to talk about the waiting until we were really good ourselves before we were fit to come to Confirmation; at least, that is what I told him I felt people ought to do; I imagined he did not see I was thinking of myself. There was no one in the parlor; papa had taken the children to walk, and Arthur had "Jenny" out, as he always will do on Sunday afternoons, instead of going to church; he goes to ride, and Laura takes a nap, so I am the only one for church in the afternoon.

Ralph—I hear Angelé call him so so much, that I am always afraid I shall do so myself some day—Ralph went on with what we were talking about, he sitting by the window, and I on the sofa, the first time we were ever quite alone before. I wonder if he thought of it! He said that was the mistake so many people made, staying away to be good, when they really desired, with all their hearts, to become so, and this was a help held out for them. It is only a year since he was confirmed. "But then," I said, "you were always good!" He has always seemed so to me, at all events; too good! it made me a little afraid of him at first!

"O no, no! do not say that!"—and he seemed so distressed. "I have been the worst headache my mother ever had." And then he told me that he had once belonged to a set no better than Joe Bloodgood's, and went to races, and lived a very idle, wretched life, until his father moved out of town to break up his intimate associations, and he lost the excellent situation he had been provided with, for his misconduct and negligence. "I was home for a whole year. O such a wretched time as it was at first! but mother, and Angelé, and papa were all so good to me, never taunting me or alluding to my disgrace, and doing all they could to make me happy. It was the disgrace that out me so, and made me see just where I was driving to. I understood perfectly well how it would tell against me in business life, for I saw it; it seemed impossible ever to get to work again. Papa's own friends told him they were afraid to try me, and there was no room in his firm; Mr. Alden has a son, and papa my cousin Lewis, so that would not do."

He told me the whole story, just how

morbid, and forsaken, and ashamed he felt, and that his father's kindness through all, made him feel how God had borne with him patiently and lovingly, and how much he owed him. It was almost like the parable of the Prodigal Son. Ralph spoke of that, and said, "nothing ever made him feel God's readiness to help us the moment we 'truly turned to Him,' like that, 'when he was yet a great way off,' his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." "

He made me see it all so clearly, and talked so beautifully, that I asked him why he had not become a clergyman. I had often wondered about it before.

He had thought of it, too, at first. He said his father did not oppose it, but asked him if he did not think he could find plenty of work in the world. That he thought—Mr. Waldron, I mean—that people needed religious influence in daily life, quite as much as pulpit preaching; that as good a sermon could be preached on 'Change as in the church, and the time had come when wealth, and energy, and practical business talent, was to give a new impetus to all Christian benevolence. After a while Ralph felt as his father had done. He is not in business for himself; that misfortune, or folly as he called it, has been against him, and though he is twenty-four, he is only a clerk still.

He told me all about it, just as if I had been his sister, and I don't think we either of us knew how the time flew by, for when papa came in, and Laura came down, tea was on the table, and papa made him stay and take it with us, just as much at home as if he were one of the family. It was silly—I knew it perfectly well—but I really enjoyed pouring out tea for him; it seemed so friendly and pleasant to have him at our table. Sunday of all nights.

Sept. 2d.

Let me try to think over some of the events of to-day, a day dreaded and yet longed for since my resolve was made.

They were all in church, Papa, Laura, Arthur, even the children. When the call was made for us to come forward—those who were to be confirmed—and I stood up alone for a moment, among them all, my hand shook so that I could scarcely untie my bonnet; I looked towards papa, and saw his lips were quivering, and his eyes had such a strange expression. He has been very kind to me ever since the day that I asked his consent, and explained to him why I thought I ought to come. But oh, how

my heart leaped for joy, when he rose too, and came out of the pew with me and gave me his arm! All my dread left me, though at first I thought he was only going up to take care of me; but he knelt by my side, dear, dear papa; and when I felt the Bishop's soft hand laid upon my head, I knew that he was blessing us together. I could scarcely listen, for happiness, to the address afterwards; and oh, how I longed for mamma then! but perhaps she saw it, and was there to bless us too. There were ten or twelve altogether, and before we returned to our seats, the Bishop told us that our charge was to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and to be Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, as long as life should last, *never being idle in his service*, or ashamed to confess Him before men; and ever to recollect that we had by our own solemn promise forsworn whatever business, or pleasure, or worldly amusement we might find, from the experience of others, or from our own, drew us aside from our duty."

It seemed so hard to tell papa, or to go in the face of Arthur's ridicule; but to think that papa is with me, and Arthur sat there so grave and thoughtful! oh, I felt as if God was too good to me, and had given me even more help than He had promised to those that put forth their own efforts.

Sept. 12th.

Our little borders make quite a gay appearance now, the bright geraniums, and petunias, the sweet-scented verbenas, and my favorite heliotrope. Laura and I have great plans for next year, and we are to have a regular vegetable garden, and not be dependent on the village for supplies. We can cut a bouquet daily, and not miss the flowers, indeed we are never without a bouquet from the Waldrons; sometimes it is Ralph, and sometimes it is Angelé who brings it. Angelé and I have been reading regularly together for several weeks, and we have such long, long talks afterwards, for she brings her thimble, and insists on helping me with my work-basket. She told me yesterday that Virginia is engaged to Joe Bloodgood. She had a friend at Newport, when they were all there, who gave her the news in her last letter. How often we have talked about our weddings, as school-girls will, and who should be asked, and who the bridesmaids; I was to be Virginia's, of course; and now I have not even heard from her since we lived here. I am glad I wrote the last letter. After all I have said, I believe I have another friend.

Angelé and I never say that we love each other, and make no promises or protestations, but whenever I am with her, I think how good and right-minded she is, and I desire to become so. When she went away last night, she turned back suddenly and kissed me full on my lips. I never had a kiss that said more; but the Waldrons are all so friendly and sincere. How heartily Mr. Waldron shook papa's hand the day after Confirmation, and how good and pleasant Ralph was.

Mrs. Gardiner has been out to see us. What a difference there is in people, as I have just said; with Angelé and her mother, or with Mrs. Phelps, I always desire to grow better; I feel that I am better for the time, and when I leave them there is a happy glow whenever I look back upon the conversation. Now there is Mrs. Gardiner, so different; I said such disagreeable things of Virginia Pryor, contrary to my new rules, and felt provoked with myself then, and so disturbed afterwards when I came to realize how uncharitable I had been; and so envious and jealous when she described the elegant presents the Bloodgoods have sent her, and the dozens and dozens of clothes that are ordered at Genin's. Mrs. Gardiner always made me feel uncomfortable, even when she flattered me the most. Yesterday she "pitied over me so," as Lily says, about being so lost to the world, with all my elegant accomplishments, shut up and tied down to such a forlorn routine. She said it would have broken mamma's heart; and then to see the children so stout and brown, "and countryfied;" Lily forgetting all her French.

It was all true after a fashion, and yet I might have made her see things as I see them, when I am alone; how much better it is for us all in many other ways. But I did not try to; I allowed myself in selfish repining. I can see now how I came to give way to the temptation. I hurried so all the morning, I was so anxious that everything should be in good order, and looking its best, that I did not stop to say my prayers, and had no right to expect defence in temptation, when I had not asked it. I find it is certainly true, that if I do not ask for help, I do not get it, but give way more and more.

When I drove "Jenny" to the depot, with Mrs. Gardiner in the afternoon (I am getting to drive quite nicely now, and it gives the boy, Lanty, just so much more time to help Ellen when I do carry papa and go for him), we met Angelé on the platform, seeing some of *their* friends off. Mrs. Gardiner noticed the hand-

some carriage, and asked who they were, and seemed quite astonished at our apparent intimacy.

She said they used to be called a very proud family, that Mrs. Waldron was a Miss Trumbull, one of the best families in the State ; and when she met her years ago, at Sharon, she held herself quite aloof from every one, and that she, Mrs. Gardiner, could never get near her at all. I can understand that. Mrs. Gardiner is so worldly and so fond of dress, there is nothing at all in common ; and besides, Mrs. Waldron spoke of that very visit to Sharon not long ago. It was when little Alice had some illness, and they were ordered there. Mrs. Waldron was saying that we ought never to miss any opportunity we had of kindly intercourse with others, if we did not feel that they had a positively wrong influence over us, and said it used to be a great fault in her to keep away from all but congenial people ; but something happened at that very time to prove to

her what a great mistake it really was, and how she missed opportunities for comforting and helping others.

I was wrong again. I knew it was vanity or pride that made me take such satisfaction in showing Mrs. Gardiner what friends we were. In my heart I do not care one bit more for Angelé because the family is rich and aristocratic. No, that would be too much like Virginia's conduct towards me ; I liked them because they were kind to me when I needed kindness so greatly, and because they are sincere, cultivated, large hearted people ; but yesterday I was glad that the best carriage was out, and Angelé in her freshly trimmed fall hat and India scarf.

Yes, I did ; I am ashamed to own it. I am just as bad as Virginia, and perhaps I have not tried enough to overcome my feeling towards her. I will try, and to be more true in my love for Angelé.

(Conclusion next month.)

TRIFLING WITH LOVE.

BY WILLIAM WIRT SIKES.

"Look here, Emma; isn't this the sweetest little pencil you ever saw?" said a young and beautiful girl to a companion, as she danced lightly in at the open door, one pleasant summer afternoon, holding the object of her remark at the same time before her friend's admiring gaze.

"Why, Nellie!" was the pleasant reply, "where did you get that? It is lovely!"

"Where should I, pray, but from George Ross?" replied Nellie, gayly, as she tossed back her curls from her rosy features.

"Mr. Ross!" ejaculated Emma; "I am astonished! Why, he is expending a fortune on you, Nellie. This is the eighth or ninth similar present within a very short time, isn't it?"

"Yes; but I don't care. If he chooses to waste his treasures on me, he just may. He knows well enough what my feelings towards him are, and they will not change."

"But, really, Nellie, I do think you are not acting just right in accepting his gifts, unless you feel some affection for him; though, whether he expresses a pure regard by this method, I shall not now opine."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the light-hearted lass! "affection, indeed! I guess all the affection I shall ever feel for George Ross, above that I feel for any other young man, might be put into that thimble!"—holding up the tiniest gold thimble imaginable on the end of her little finger. "At all events," she added, "if he does win my love, he will have purchased it—and paid well for it, too!" And the merry maid began playing with a little kitten, holding a fine gold chain for it to leap at.

"Well, Nellie," said Emma, gravely, "of course I have no right to interfere with your affairs unless I am requested to; but I feel compelled to say that I cannot but fear an ill result, and that, too, before long. I never knew such thoughtless trifling to yield anything but ill; and I have known much of these things, as you are aware, Nellie. But I do wrong to trouble you, perhaps; I will say no more."

"Oh, you may say just what you please, Emma," said Nellie, in a careless, good-natured manner. "I will listen to you like a mamma, my dear, and report your counsel to Mr. Ross,

too, if you want me to! You know two heads are better than one!"—and another merry laugh told how little gravity the thoughtless girl was capable of entertaining in her gay young heart. "Pray go on, Emma; see how demure I am!"—and the roguish eyes laughed again, despite the prim-drawn corners of her ruby-lipped mouth. Then, doubtless, to add force to her request, she threw the chain around the kitten's neck, and they scampered off together into the garden.

Emma laughed heartily, in spite of herself, at the little witch's pranks, and ran out after her just in time to prevent her running pell-mell across a favorite flower-bed.

These two girls, or (as our fashionable city circles would denominate them, though I love best the simple and youthful title) young ladies, were long-trying friends, having been associates from childhood. Emma Lord was the daughter of a respectable citizen in the village of Bumble, and was some three years the senior of her mate, the laughing Nellie May. She was possessed of all those excellent traits so desirable in a wife, and was in every way a prize, though she was perhaps not Nellie's equal in personal beauty. But, as she has little to do with our tale, I may as well say here, for the satisfaction of wife-seeking gentlemen readers, that she was at that time betrothed, and subsequently was married to the object of her love.

Nellie May, her gay companion, was the acknowledged belle of Bumble, although she had but just turned into the realms of "sweet sixteen." Her beauty was of that clear, soft character which causes the beholder instinctively to think of velvet, or swan's-down, or of whatever else is remarkably soft and delightful to the touch. A complexion clear as alabaster, possessing a faint damask tint that deepened into a cheerful red on her dimpled cheek, and features eloquent with feeling and gleaming with expression, were tempered by

"Eyes, blue as June's sky, when stars light up
Its deep, clear music; languishing as love
In all their language. A foot
Light as but used to tread on silken down,
And echo music; and a hand that looked
But made to wander o'er the golden harp."

Of her faults, we need not speak. Our story

will develop all that need be said on that score. She was possessed of an excellent reputation for kindness and sweetness of temper, and her heart was known to be as lovely as its earthly casket. Thus it was not surprising that, according to the old Scotch rhyme, all the youths in Bumble were

"Wooring at her,
Pu'ing at her,
Wanting her, but could nae get her."

George Ross, who has been introduced in the conversation at the opening of the story, was at this time a clerk in the post-office at Bumble, which his father served the government in superintending. He was, in village parlance, a mighty stylish chap, associated with the "first cut" (which term was then and there understood to mean the lawyer's sons, the doctor's sons, the banker's daughters, and the merchant's daughters); wore a coat and unmentionables of the "latest cut" (which term, in those days, did not mean *à la meal bag* as to the former, and *à la circus rider* as to the latter); was the "buck" at the ball-room; the "pink" of the public assemblage; the "life" of the boat-ride, and the "dear fellow" everywhere. With this description of his character, the reader will be amply prepared for the announcement that his principal aim was to secure the appellation among the lads and lasses of "Nelly May's beau"; for, as such, he would be placed at the pinnacle of the Bumble "first society," and reign acknowledged leader as well among the belles as the beaux, by virtue of his title-deed to the heart of the belle *par excellence* of the village. It was his great aim, and he resolved to accomplish it, at least superficially, at any sacrifice.

I wish here to give my readers a bit of advice in regard to the dangerous and supremely foolish practice of endeavoring to purchase affection with costly presents. Cupid is not to be won with jewels, nor "bought over," like a mere member of Congress, with hard dollars. Hearts (*hearts*, mind you!) are not susceptible to the winning sound of clinking cash; and he that would win a heart worth the winning, must make *himself* acceptable—not his gifts; else, when he ceases giving, the fair one (who is oftener a fellow-dupe than a designer) ceases to look with aught more of favor upon him than upon another.

"What is the price of this locket?" inquired young Ross of Taylor, the jeweller, as he pointed out a beautifully ornamented one that lay in the show-case.

"That?" said the jeweller, shrewdly, as he drew it forth and laid it before the young man. "Oh, that comes very high—higher than you want to give, doubtless. We have only one such. It was bought more for show than for sale. It is the only one of the kind that we ever came across, and it is the mate to one that Hon. Mr. ——— bought last winter for General ———'s daughter."

Ross having swallowed the statement without any apparent effort, the dose acted powerfully, moving his desire actively toward the bauble.

"Well, what do you call it worth?" he said, carelessly, as he drew forth his purse.

"You can have it for \$30, Mr. Ross."

"Do it up!" was the rejoinder, as the requisite sum was laid on the counter.

That night, George Ross was a visitor in the little parlor of Nellie May's cottage, and the locket was gracefully fastened on the already overloaded chain of the beauty by the ardent suitor. Nellie was in raptures, as in duty bound; it was "so sweet, such a love, so charming—oh!"

The jeweller turned to his desk as young Ross departed, and recorded the sale. Then turning over the leaves, and resting his finger here and there, he ciphered on a piece of paper a moment, and then exclaimed—

"Nearly two hundred dollars, as I'm alive! Declare, that looks bad! Wonder where he gets all his money! Don't know as it's my business, either; good customer—cash down—no bickering! However, I've misgivings; must clear this up some how. Let me see; I've a suspicion that—" And the man subsided into a chair and a reverie, in which we leave him.

I have represented Ross's preference for Nellie May as being the offspring of ambition. Somebody has said that making love for diversion is dangerous amusement, for first one knows his heart is gone, and he head and ears in love. A modern writer, in speaking of platonic love, tells us that, like most things which begin with *pla*, it is very likely to end in earnest. Thus, the ambitious passion that first moved the waters of George Ross's soul soon changed into the fire of genuine love. Possessed of a heart naturally susceptible, not to say romantic, it is not at all strange that the excellent traits of the lovely girl should awaken a deep affection for her, and though he saw, and could not fail to see, but too evidently, in the frank and open behavior of his idol, the exact light in which she beheld him, still love controlled him. His whole attention gradually was bestowed on her, until finally, through all his thoughts by day

and his dreams by night, one form continually floated—hers.

"Love became to his impassioned soul
Not, as with others, a mere part
Of his existence, but the whole—
The very life-breath of his heart!"

"Ross!" said Fred Williams to his friend, as they sat in the back-door of the village post-office, gazing out upon a large garden which lay before them; "ah—excuse my impertinence, you know—but I'd like to know what the deuce you think you're going to make, running after Nellie May? Do you think you can win her?"

"Do I *think* so? Say, Williams, do you think that tree is a vegetable, or is it a quadruped? Do you think that pond is rain-water, or is it gin? Do I *think* I can win her! No, sir, it's past thinking; I know I can. She's not such a monstrosity among women that I can't touch her heart; I've got the phoenix—the rhino; that's what will do what everything else fails of accomplishing."

"O pshaw! I don't believe that! Nellie May ain't a girl to be bought. Besides, didn't you ever hear the story of a sort of a love-match between her and a young man now travelling in Europe? an author, and all that, you know?"

"Poh! a little girl and boy friendship, I assure you; nothing more. I don't care for your authors—poh! garrets and green cheese, poetry and poverty. I'll risk him!"

"But they say she loves him; and that's all one needs from such a girl as she is, I should judge. Once get her affections, and a man's pockets will never enter into the affair at all. Don't you know that?"

"Yes, what of it?" was the reply, in a tone of irritation. "So much the better, I tell you! I'll get her affections; hang me if I don't! I tell you, Fred Williams, I'll *make* her love me, or ruin myself."

And this was the principle upon which young Ross acted.

One wet, stormy evening in autumn, the door bell was violently rung; and, going to the door, Nellie admitted George Ross. He was pale and haggard; there was an expression in his bloodshot eye that the sensitive girl shrank from instinctively, at the first glance. His curly hair was confusedly thrown back from his forehead; his lips were white, as if with some excessive fear, and every feature betokened mental aberration. He seated himself, with an effort at carelessness, beside the

piano, and requested Nellie to play for him. Though his words were courteous, there was such an intensity in the expression of his wish that the girl obeyed silently, as if under the influence of a spell. She played indifferently, in consequence of her agitation, for nearly before her sat the youth gazing on her from those fiery eyes with an expression that seemed to pierce her heart. As she paused after the faulty execution of a brilliant *varie*, he said, in the same intense manner—

"Sing, Nellie!"

"What shall it be, George?" said she, soothingly, speaking with that tone of consideration one instinctively assumes toward an excited or intoxicated man.

"Anything! anything!" he exclaimed, moving restlessly in his chair.

She began a favorite love song. Ross laid his head upon the piano, burying his face in his hands. Suddenly he sprang up and paced hurriedly to and fro. As the song concluded, and the beautiful girl arose from the piano, he advanced to her, and throwing his arms about her, clasped her to his breast. She gently disengaged herself, but said nothing, for she was now conscious there was a desperation, a wildness in his brain—the more terrible to her because she understood it not. And so, though she questioned whether the apparent aberration was due to intoxicating liquors or a diseased brain, she understood enough to know that her part was to treat him gently, or there might be a terrible outburst of passion. Her first impulse had been that natural to a timid girl—to leave him, and speak to her parents; but then she remembered that her father was absent, and her mother unwell, and she bravely endeavored to persuade herself that she had nothing to fear, after all.

"Be seated, Mr. Ross!" she remarked, with an air of mild coldness.

"Seated!" he echoed, musingly. "Pray why should I be seated? What were seats made for? Not for lovers—O no! lovers should recline on mossy banks, as they do in the books of old romance! Seated!" he added, slowly and earnestly; "no, never again, here!"

He advanced as he spoke, and knelt before the young girl as she sat on the sofa. Claspings both her hands in his, he exclaimed, huskily, half whispering—

"Nellie, let us fly! Come, go with me to Italy, where we can live and love together. I have plenty of money—plenty. Come, go with me, away from this lonely village, to that sunny land where we can be each other's forever, and

live in the light of our own bright smiles. I cannot stay longer here; they will not let me; it is impossible; I *must* go, and you—you must go, too; it will kill me if you say no; yes, you must—must—must!”—and he buried his face in the folds of her dress.

Suddenly springing to his feet, he gazed, in a listening posture, toward the door, while his face assumed a deeper pallor, and his eyes gleamed wildly; but again he resumed his kneeling position at the feet of the now thoroughly terrified girl, who sat mute and unresisting, as in a trance.

“Will you, Nellie?” he resumed; and as he gazed imploringly into her averted eyes, and no answer came, he began singing, in a low, touching tone, an old song:—

“Oh, hie with thy lover
Far over the sea,
Whose fond heart is beating
And breaking for thee;
To the warm sunny lands
We'll hasten together,
And the love that I bear thee
Shall bind us forever!

“Thy presence shall gladden,
Shall guide me along;
Thy voice shall still echo
Thy spirit in song.
Then haste with thy lover
Far over the sea,
Whose fond heart is beating
And breaking for thee!”

He finished, and awaited, with beseeching eyes, her reply. None came. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, trembling like an aspen, and exclaimed: “They are coming! coming, Nellie; I hear them; do not you? Listen! it is their horses' hoofs coming down the hill; I know it; it is they! it is they!”—and the frantic youth rushed to the maiden who was gazing on him in speechless impotence.

“Will you go, Nellie?” he huskily exclaimed, as he grasped her arm; “will you? Speak—quick—a moment, and it will be too late! Your answer, girl—the last time—say!”

At length her soul found utterance.

“George Ross,” she said, with a quivering voice, “what do you mean? what is this? Release my arm!”

“There, there!” he exclaimed, as he pushed her from him in a rage; “I told you so; too late, too late—they are here!” And at that moment the door opened and Mr. May entered, accompanied by two constables, who seized the young man and bore him, struggling, away.

The poor girl, unable to comprehend it all, swooned and fell upon the floor. She awoke on her bed, to which she was confined for weeks

with a burning fever. Happily for her, her illness was the means of saving her from the shock of appearing in court to testify with regard to the time and manner of the reception of divers gifts from the enamored thief.

For such he was proved to be. A decoy letter had detected him in his purloining practices at the post-office, suspicion having been turned toward him by certain circumstances of a peculiar character.

He served out his term in prison. When he was released, he returned to Bumble, only to remain a few days, when he departed for parts unknown.

Need I point out the moral of my tale?

TWO WAYS OF KEEPING A WIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

CHAPTER I.

It was an event of no ordinary importance which drew together so large and gay an assemblage at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Pierson, on a moonlight evening of early May. Two sisters, who had hardly been separated for a day from the birth of the younger until now, were united in wedlock to young men, intimate friends and partners in business. It is seldom that unions so agreeable to the parties most nearly concerned meet with such unequivocal approbation from relatives and the public at large, as did this double marriage. Both brides were pretty, one beautiful; both sensible, amiable, and refined. The grooms formed an undeniably eligible firm in appearance, intelligence, moral worth, and enterprise.

"And they have paired with singular judgment," commented a beau to a lady acquaintance. "Wonder if it was by mutual and unselfish agreement that the better looking man took the plainer girl? A novel method of striking a balance, was it not?"

"I am rather disposed to consider it as another illustration of the all-prevailing law of compensations," rejoined his fair companion. "In point of loveliness, or lovableness, if you will allow the polysyllable, however, the sisters are more alike. If either is my favorite, I must concede the palm to Fanny, whom you call 'plain.' She has more character than Rose, who unconsciously relies somewhat upon her face to win love, and open her a path through the world."

"She may well trust to it," would have been the comment of the happy and fortunate husband, if he had overheard the criticism. Yet John Gray was not liable to be governed by the

desire of the eye. In his selection of Rose Pierson as a helpmate in the life which was so practical and earnest a matter with him, her beauty was the least weighty of the considerations that swayed him. To-night, in the fullness of his wedded bliss, while he recognized, with the rest of her spectators, the enhancement of every charm by excitement and happiness, he exulted less in the possession of the greatest of these, than did Raymond Parkhurst in the contemplation of the—to others—less attractive sister. But, to the lookers-on, if the handsome features expressed more pleasure than did the naturally graver countenance of his partner, it was because they *were* handsome and eloquent in their obedience to the mandate of feeling.

"John Gray was a steady, safe, good fellow," said men of the world. "The concern was a flourishing one, and without pretending to a knowledge of what went on behind the scenes," they surmised shrewdly, that "he was the balance-wheel, the hold-back horse to Parkhurst's enthusiasm, which some"—not themselves, of course, but the ubiquitous, infallibly-judging "Some"—"might term 'flightiness.'"

With the other sex, Parkhurst was decidedly popular. More than one rosy cheek paled for an instant as his fervent response to the nuptial vow broke the stillness of the crowded room; many a soft heart heaved with an involuntary sigh at the sight of his devotion to his bride, and her modest, yet palpable appreciation of the prize she had drawn in the greatest and most uncertain of lotteries. Not that Raymond had ever indulged in the very fashionable and very masculine recreation—with too many, a studied profession—of flirting. His attentions had been as open as they were general and

sincere, until he fell in love with Fanny Pierson's frank, smiling face and fascinating manners. If any maiden chose to wear the willow for him, her assumption of the woeful wreath was gratuitous, and by him unsuspected. He "liked the ladies," he would have affirmed, with a hearty "Heaven bless them!" He felt a spontaneous affection and reverence for everything in the shape of womanhood, for had not he "a darling mother, the jewel of all women, and four of the best sisters in the universe," still living in and about the old homestead, a hundred miles or so back in the country? And, as his eyes dwell lovingly upon the bright young creature at his side, pass from her face to the simple, broad band of gold upon her finger, with a smile of triumphant security, experienced, for the first time in all its rapturous sweetness, by the newly-made husband, when God and man have set a public seal upon the heart-contract, one sees clearly what is his mental supplement to the eulogium upon the sex at large, and the feminine portion of his family in particular.

John Gray had been reared very differently. He, too, had a mother, a strong-minded, strong-doing woman, who had thrust out, in succession, five sons from the parent-nest so soon as their callow bodies were, figuratively, covered with feathers enough to keep them from freezing outright. Once beyond the shelter of their birthplace, the principle of action, if not of speech, was, "Fly or break your neck!" Four did fly, after a while, vigorously and successfully; a fifth, the youngest, who most narrowly missed being the home-pet, if one could imagine such an anomaly in the mother's stern, hard existence, kept back from the venture, though he was longer than any of his predecessors, flattered aimlessly from bough to bough, heedless of maternal admonition and paternal remonstrance, and then fell, few knew or cared into what jaws of temptation or pit of crime. John was the third son, and none other had thriven better since his compulsory achievement of an independent career. His early lot had not soured him. His temper, if firm, was even and pleasant; his principles, if rigid, strictly honorable, or, to use a word we value more highly in these so-called "honorable" times, honest. If less admired than his associate in business, he was universally respected, and beloved by one, at least, with a depth and strength that would have compensated, to a more craving heart, for the death of motherly and sisterly tenderness.

The bridal tours of the two couples were to

the respective homes of the bridegrooms. Rose was welcomed with solid satisfaction, and made much of, after the fashion of her ambitious mother-in-law, as the daughter of a wealthy and prominent citizen of a growing city, and the probable stepping-stone "to my son's" increased honor and affluence; while Fanny was "Ray's wife" to the five doating, "dearest women in the universe;" petted, caressed, almost worshipped, at first, in virtue of this relationship; subsequently, for her own sake. Mr. Pierson's primary action with regard to his sons-in-law would not have disappointed Mrs. Gray, Senior, had he not contented himself, for the present, with bestowing upon the sisters neatly-furnished houses, built and finished in modern style, situated in a block of buildings owned by himself.

"The house is all very well," pronounced the sagacious dame, when she spent a day in the city, to see for herself how her son was likely to fare after his recent "investment." "Indeed, it is too handsome for a man of your means, John. Young people should not strive to begin where their parents left off. In making you this gift, Mr. Pierson binds upon you the obligation to live in a certain style, which does not seem to me to befit a man who has his fortune to make. It would have been more wise and kind in him to give you the worth of the property in money. You could have invested it in your business, or in some other way. Money grows by handling. It is like a snowball, swells by being often turned over. Real estate is an incumbrance, unless one rents it out, or can afford to have his funds bound up in it until the property greatly increases in value. You cannot sell this at any rate, during Mr. Pierson's lifetime. It is a pity that you must be hampered by family feeling and policy."

"But, mother," said John, respectfully, "we must live somewhere, and where so comfortably and cheaply as in our own house? The saving of a year's rent will almost cover our other expenses."

"Where! why, in a boarding-house, in a decent, not over-stylish establishment, such as millionaires have not disdained to occupy after their incomes doubled, trebled, yes, quadrupled the amount of their original capital."

John was silent. Ashamed as he was of the ungrateful slurs cast upon the generosity of his wife's father, he could not but acknowledge to himself that there was a deal of practical wisdom in his mother's comments.

"What is done cannot be helped, I suppose,"

resumed Mrs. Gray, lowering her voice as Rose was heard approaching. "All that you can do towards retrieving this injudicious step is to study good management and practise economy."

At Fanny's urgent sollicitation, Mabel Raymond's only unmarried sister passed ten days with them immediately after their induction into their new abode. She carried back such a description of this sojourn in that terrestrial paradise, "Ray's and Fanny's house," that the mother, who, in country parlance, "had not been out of the smoke of her chimneys" for thirty years, was beguiled, in a moment of excitement, with a half-promise "to look in upon the boy some time next winter, if Providence spared her life and health so long."

Mr. Pierson, with the counsel and assistance of his wife, had succeeded in rendering the sisters' dwellings almost exact counterparts each of the other. If there was any difference, it consisted in sundry luxurious devices, planned and executed by Mrs. Pierson for promoting the comfort of her elder, and it was sometimes whispered, her best-loved child. Fanny was too noble of spirit, and herself loved her beautiful sister too well to be jealous, had such favoritism existed, and she knew that there was no ground for imputation save in the imaginations of those who promulgated the story. Rose was, in disposition, dependent, and as a child had been delicate in health. It became the habit of the household to indulge her, and her second nature to expect and need indulgence.

"She is a sensitive plant, John. Deal very gently with her," was the mother's charge in relinquishing her into her husband's keeping, and his response was sincere in its emphasis: "My own life shall not be guarded so carefully as her ease and happiness!"

"I am behaving very generously towards you," Mr. Pierson said to Raymond, as they grasped hands at parting, the morning after the marriage. "I am robbing my home of its brightest sunshine in resigning my Fanny to you."

Time sped on with its burden of changes, responsibilities, and joys, and brought the second anniversary of the double wedding—a fortnight later, the birthday of the sisters, which, by a rather singular coincidence, occurred upon the same day of the month, Rose being exactly two years Fanny's senior. This year it chanced to fall upon Monday, at once the dread and comfort of notable housewives, the universal washing-time, which a wicked wit asserts to have been Job's natal-day—the one he

cursed. The afternoon was warm; within doors, oppressive. Rose Gray sat in her nursery. Her sewing lay in the basket by her side, thimble and scissors thrown upon it, dropped hastily to be resumed at the earliest possible moment. Her present occupation was the attempt to soothe and amuse a fretful, puny girl upon her lap. Maternal duties and anxieties had stolen elasticity from the frame, and color from the cheek of the young wife. It was easy to perceive that she had grown comparatively indifferent to her dress and appearance. Although several hours had elapsed since dinner, she still wore a morning-wrapper, clean and whole indeed, but old-fashioned in pattern and faded by use. It had formed a part of her *trousseau*, and her wardrobe contained few garments of a later date.

"I should not know what to do with it," she would reply to her sister's recommendations to purchase this or that article of apparel. "I had such a number of dresses when I was married, that I have not begun to wear them out. Then, too, I stay at home so closely, that it would be sheer extravagance to add to my stock of clothing."

The room was in perfect order. The furniture, Mr. Pierson's gift, was, with the exception of the cradle, in every respect the same as upon the day the owners had taken possession, and its good preservation argued housewifery the most careful and painstaking, the thought of which would have caused any reflecting mother a throb of pity, as she looked at the babe, just arrived at the most troublesome and mischievous age. But the little creature seemed to have no heart for play, no propensity to litter the carpet, or toss around all the movables it could lay its restless hands upon. The heat from its swollen gums had diffused itself throughout the body, and was aggravated by the sultry day.

"There, there, my darling!" murmured Rose, as the peevish wail recommenced, and the child's limbs writhed in passion or suffering. "Is mamma's Hetty thirsty? does she want some bread? Oh, see the beautiful dolly grandpa gave her!"

Hetty rejected drink, food, and toy, and the plaintive, yet annoying cry continued to torment the parent's nerves.

"O me!" sighed she, rising with the infant in her arms, and pacing the floor. It was not the novelty of the ordeal, but its repetition, that forced the tears now coursing down her face. She did not know that they were there, only that there was some relief of the suffocation in her throat, the dull aching in her back.

They were such unreasonable drops as arouse quick-tempered men to anger, and good-natured ones to contempt, which all concur in pronouncing "womanish" and "babyish"—descriptive epithets, that none of the initiated of our sisterhood should care to dispute. Let us rather be thankful for their flow, when sleepless nights, and days of fatigue, and solitude, not the less wearing because it is noted "unnecessary," "altogether uncalled-for," "what all mothers have to undergo and should therefore expect," have racked and strained muscle and nerve; turned our daily bread into ashes, blunted our perceptions to all that was once beautiful to the sight, pleasant to the ear, stimulative to the intellect.

One single complaint had Rose uttered in the hearing of her healthy, hearty-eating, soundly-sleeping lord: "I had no idea that babies were such a trouble!" she was unnatural enough to say, at the close of a toilsome day, following upon a vigil as trying.

John let his paper fall in an excess of surprise and indignation. "Rose! I never expected to hear such language from you! Would you be happier if your child were taken from you? One might suppose, from your manner and words, that you wished her dead!"

"Dead!" Oh, he little guessed what a leaden weight crashed through the mother's brain, and tore its way to the bottom of her heart, when the full meaning, the direful import of that word rested there. How could he suspect, when he chided her, in the morning, for having taken the babe to her couch, there to sap the foundations of strength and vitality, by its remorseless demands, that she had sprung, at midnight, from the pillow, wet with the hot tears of self-reproach, and wild, terrible forebodings of the awful thing he had named, and crept to the side of the crib where reposed her darling in the dreamless, unstirring sleep of infancy, so like its twin brother, Death! how eagerly, *hungrily* she had snatched her idol to her bosom at the thought. Yes, hailed its awakening scream with an inarticulate, but how devout a thanksgiving that it was still alive and hers!

A lumpish Irish girl, red-armed, and slatternly from the washtub, checked the doleful promenade through the apartment. Between a moist finger and thumb she held a card.

"Lady and gentleman in the parlor for ye, Mrs. Gray!"

"Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham!" read Rose, in dismay. "What shall I do?"

They were influential friends of Mr. Gray's,

fashionable, punctilious people, whose acquaintance he particularly wished her to cultivate.

"Catherine! don't you think Hetty will stay with you a little while? Will not you try to keep her quiet while I am in the parlor? just a few minutes, Catherine?"

The girl, thus implored, extended her arms, but Hetty rebelled at the sulky invitation, and clung screamingly to her mother's neck.

"What shall I do?" reiterated the nearly distracted Rose. "Hetty! be still! you must go! Take her, Catherine!"

Literally torn from her hold, the child was borne off, filling the house with her shrieks. To this music, which no walls or doors could deaden, Mrs. Gray was obliged to listen while, panting from recent exertion and her hasty toilet, she tried to entertain her visitors. Relieved at length by their politely considerate departure, she flew to the kitchen to quell the tumult. Catherine was deep in her tub, and Hetty, sitting upon the floor, in alarming and most uncomfortable proximity to the red-hot stove, inhaling, at each vociferous inspiration, the vapor, redolent of turpentine soap, and the more nauseous effluvia of suds, into which the soiled clothes had undergone a nominal purification—the not-analyzable, but unmistakable incense that ascends weekly from thousands of kitchens in our land, to the patron saint—if there be a saint with such villanous taste in perfumes—of washing-day.

"When will I be setting the tay-table?" queried Catherine, as her mistress—*par complaisance*—reshouldered her heavy load.

"It is almost time!" answered Rose, with a despairing look at the clock. "Don't leave your work, Catherine. I will do it for you."

The nymph of the suds evinced neither surprise nor gratitude at this reply. Why should she, when her question had been designed as a hint to her fellow-laborer that this portion of her regular Monday's duties was not to be evaded for such slight reasons as a crying baby, headache, lassitude, and painful bones? A woman can accomplish wonders, in an emergency, with one hand; and Rose, tolerably well-trained, of late, to these feats, put on the kettle, and proceeded to spread the cloth in the dining-room; to set cups, saucers, plates, and glasses; to arrange spoons, knives and forks, with Hetty, diverted by the clattering china and bright silver, therefore quiet for the nonce upon her arm. But bread, butter, cake, and John's indispensable chipped beef were still to be prepared, and Miss Hetty's lively sense of her grievous personal wrongs was re-kindled in all its bitter-

ness when she found herself tied in a high chair, and left to seek amusement by inspecting her own image in the bowl of a spoon. The bread was cut unevenly and too thick—a point concerning which, John, although not a confessed epicure, was very particular; and the cake was forgotten, along with the glass dish of preserves or stewed fruit that usually mounted guard before his plate.

Unconscious of her shortcomings, Rose ascended the stairs to the nursery, cast, for the hundredth time that day, a wishful, hopeless glance at the work-basket and its pile of collars, a new set, for which John was "actually suffering," and addressed herself anew to the refreshing, delightful recreation (?) of tending the baby. "Mere sport—entrancing occupation—a never-ending, ever new joy," say out-of-the-house-all-day husbands, sentimental misses, and poetic amateur nursery-loungers, and the public is bound to take their descriptions for unembellished truth, for has it not been with them "a favorite study?" Rose Gray was neither sentimental nor poetic. She loved her baby better than she did the right hand that held her up to her sore and bowed shoulder; better than the head bent, in very exhaustion, upon the flaxen poll of the little one; better than the blood that filled her veins; yet, if the hand had felt less like parting company with its faithful wrist, the shoulders been erect and free, instead of cramping lungs and heart; had the head throbbed less violently, and the blood streamed in a cooler, slower tide, she would have been in a fitter condition to appreciate the gushing melody of the "well-spring of pleasure," the above-quoted Tupperian philosophers are fond of describing.

Fanny Parkhurst's spacious dressing-room had been converted into a nursery at nearly the same date with the advent of Hetty Gray. Master Charles Pierson Parkhurst was the occasion of this innovation in household arrangements—an important personage in his small sphere, a distinction he recognized by the daily, hourly development of some eminently boyish trait. His lungs were powerful; his limbs active and lusty; his temper quick, yet in the main sunny, and, under the tutelage of his proud father, he was fast becoming the noisiest, most reckless romp that ever smashed crockery, or tumbled fifty times per diem from every imaginable and unimaginable climbing-place. On the spring afternoon that so tried the patience of his cousin and his aunt, the chubby rogue was extended on the carpet of his state drawing-room, changed from its original

use, as before related, to accommodate his highness, kicking his fat heels into the air with a sort of lordly independence that accorded well with his pouting mouth and laughing eyes. Near by was his mother—her book closed upon her finger, her lips parted in a smile at the antics of her first-born. Her face was slightly flushed with the warmth of the day. A glass of iced water, and a palm-leaf fan on the stand at her elbow, showed that she was not insensible to the effects of the change of season, but the glow made her complexion seem fresher and clearer than was its wont, and her animated expression, even girlish in its glee, combined with this to give her a more youthful appearance than had been Fanny Pierson's on her bridal eve. Her robe was a thin *barège*, its colors well-contrasted and delicate, its flounces falling in silky folds from the slender, rotund waist to the floor. For a headdress, she wore a spray of myrtle intertwined with pink and white verbenas. The breath of other and sweeter flowers—mignonette, roses, and lilacs—stole balmily upon the senses from a bouquet that graced the mantel. Their vernal beauties would not have been safe at a shorter distance from the grasping fingers of the embryo Alexander, rolling about on the rug like a seal in the sunshine. They were not hot-house exotics, but blossoms of domestic growth, common home-plants. Raymond had bought them at market that morning; cheated the dullard of a saleswoman by paying a "levy" for a room-full of perfume, such as Nourmahal might have coveted in the midst of her orange-blooms and tuberoses. The honest fellow felt a twinge of conscience at the recollection of the swindle, unthinkingly perpetrated, as Fanny caught the bouquet from his hand on his return home to breakfast, and buried her nose so deeply in its recesses, that only her delighted eyebrows were visible above it; then thanked the "darlingest, most thoughtful of husbands," with a kiss, in which was blent all the fragrance of the flowers.

The tableau of mother and boy was thrown into disorder by the sound of a bounding step and cheery whistle upon the staircase. Instantly, Master Charley whirled over to his hands and feet, and crept rapidly towards the door. He did not reach it until his mother had received her salutatory kiss, and his father was quite ready for him.

"Hallo, my man!" exclaimed Raymond, catching up the sturdy urchin, and tossing him up and down, as far as his stalwart arms could carry him. "Want to fly, hey? So he shall,

as long as papa can furnish him with wings. Hear him chuckle, Fan! What a boy it is!"

"I wish he would walk, instead of creeping," said Fanny. "He soils and wears out so many frocks. Who would think that he was dressed clean directly after dinner?"

"Papa and Charley don't care!" retorted Raymond, tickling the plump neck with kisses, until the babe fairly shouted in his merriment. "We admire dirty frocks and torn aprons; don't we, my boy? 'Tisn't everybody's child that can creep, but we are a locomotive, with full steam on. See!"—taking a ball from his pocket, and trundling it along the floor—"Charley, catch! Now go it! How the fellow travels!"

"I play brakeman to this train!" laughed Fanny, capturing boy and ball together. "Really, Ray, dear, I had as lief not have the trouble of washing and dressing him again this afternoon. This sultry weather makes me lazy."

"Are you not well?" inquired the husband anxiously.

"Perfectly; only a little languid in consequence of the unusual heat, and the sudden change in the atmosphere. I am always more tired on Monday afternoon than on any other day—"

"Because you will undertake the sole care of the child!" returned Raymond. "I wish you would listen to my persuasions and hire an extra washerwoman, if your cook cannot get up the clothes in proper season. It worries me to see you do a servant's work!"

"Tell papa that he knows nothing about the fine times we have here—all by ourselves!" said Fanny, presenting the baby's mouth for a kiss. "Bessie only helps Bridget in the kitchen until the clothes are washed and hung out. If papa and Charley like to make frocks and aprons dirty, they must not blame mamma and Bessie for liking to see them clean again."

She lifted Charley to one of his father's knees, and established herself upon the other. Raymond trotted them alternately.

"It is hard to tell which is the heavier," he said, jocosely; then, gravely: "You are not looking very robust now-a-days, pet."

"Ah! It is only a fancy of yours, I think. I suffer no pain. I eat and sleep well, and am conscious of no indisposition."

Raymond did not reply. He appeared to be listening to the passing of vehicles in the street. Gently setting aside his double burden, he walked to the window.

"Come here, Fanny!"

A light buggy, drawn by a glossy horse, was at the door. The whole equipage was so neat and stylish that Fanny exclaimed with admiration—

"A pretty turnout! What a beauty that horse is! To whom does it belong?"

"To you!"

"You are going to treat me to a ride, then? You are too good! and I have been wishing all day for a breath of fresh air! But where did you hire such an elegant establishment? It has not the livery-stable look."

"I bought the horse several weeks since, that I might assure myself that he was a safe animal before I put my treasures at his mercy; the buggy I had built, stipulating that it should be completed by to-day. Will my wife accept it as a token that her husband loves her better, is more desirous to minister to her comfort and happiness, than he was two years ago? It is but a poor proof, after all, of how much dearer the wife is than was the bride."

Forgetful of passers-by and opposite neighbors, Fanny threw her arms about his neck, and fairly sobbed upon his bosom. "It is too much, too much!" she cried. "You make a spoiled baby of me, Raymond!" laughing hysterically, and wiping away the tears that others fell fast to replace.

"Fie! my darling," said Raymond, pretending to scold, while his eyes were full also. "You are ruining your eyes and making your nose red, when you ought to be looking your prettiest, for you are to ride in your own carriage now, directly. Hear Charley blubber 'mamma!' Do quiet his distressed heart! He thinks I have been maltreating you."

"May I take him with us?" asked Fanny.

"Certainly; he can sit between us. You shall not hold him on your knee again, as you did the other day; he is growing too heavy. I am convinced that a ride in that position does you more harm than good."

"You rate my powers of endurance at a very low figure," said Fanny, busying herself with getting out the hats and wrappings necessary for their jaunt.

"Not at all; I wish to preserve them unimpaired. Give me Charley's cap and cloak; I will play dressing-maid to him."

The new buggy swung easily upon its springs; the cushions of the seat and back were "just right," Fanny declared; Charley was miraculously quiet in the mighty interest awakened by the various objects they passed; the sleek bay was gentle as fleet, and his owners compared notes, with the gratifying conclusion that no

excursion of their courtship was ever more pleasant than this ride into the green and fragrant country.

"Do all women think their husbands the best of mankind?" wondered Fanny, thoughtfully; "or am I really more highly favored than a majority of wives?"

"Not a bit of it!" returned Raymond, bluntly; "every seine that splashes into the sea matrimonial brings up better fish than you have caught. Good-afternoon, Mr. Brent."

They had turned the horse's head towards the city, and the individual addressed—a fat farmer, driving a pony as corpulent—took the right side of the road to give them the main track. As he did so, he raised his hand as a signal that he had something to say. With apparent reluctance, Raymond halted.

"I left the strawberries and the genuine cream—no chalk and water—according to our arrangement," he drawled. "Hope you'll enjoy them." And pury man and pony jogged on.

"Strawberries!" repeated Fanny, "and cream! What does it all mean, dear?"

"It means that a little surprise which I meditated as a sauce to your supper is spoiled by an officious tongue," said Raymond, provoked.

"What a man you are!" was the brief rejoinder; but the affectionate glance accompanying the ambiguous sentence spoke volumes. "I have but one suggestion to offer with regard to your programme of 'the day we celebrate,'" remarked Fanny, as they neared home; "have you any objection to Rose's and John's company to tea? You know this is her birthday, too."

"I remember; and shall be more than glad to have them with us. Here we are close by their house. I will wait for you, while you run in and invite them."

Fanny was absent longer than Charley thought convenient, and the endeavor to appease his resentment at the injury he had sustained occupied his mother until they were set down at their own door. Bessie, a smiling lass, whose rosy face and white apron were alike discreet concerning the mysteries of the kitchen rites which had occupied her since early morning, ran down the steps to receive the "babby." The man from the livery-stable was in attendance by appointment, and, transferring the reins to his keeping, Raymond followed his wife up to her chamber. Her sparkling countenance was subdued into pensiveness; but, without speaking, she folded her shawl and laid it away with her bonnet, brushed her hair, and

replaced her headdress. Then she sought her favorite perch—her husband's knee—and the concealed trouble came out, as he had expected.

"Poor Rose!"

"What of her?" inquired Raymond.

"She is overtaken, Ray! John is a kind, worthy fellow, but his education did not qualify him to cherish as he should a girl so delicately reared as was our Rose. She never thinks, much less speaks, a word of complaint; but it tries my forbearance sorely to see her fading beauty, and remark how her strength has failed. She is a slave to everybody, husband, child, even to her servant. There she was, pacing the floor, trying to sing to the cross babe that has scarcely been out of her arms the live-long day, looking ready to drop with fatigue and headache. Hetty fretted so that I could with difficulty make her understand my errand, and myself comprehend her refusal."

"She refused, did she?"

"Yes. Keeping but one girl, as she does, the entire care of the child falls on Rose's shoulders every Monday and Tuesday—"

"And at most other times, too, I suspect," interrupted Raymond. "To-morrow is ironing-day; Wednesday baking-day; Thursday scrubbing-day; Friday Catherine's rest-day, a season the 'mistress' never has the remotest glimpse of; and Saturday general cleaning-day. It is a shame for a man to impose upon a wife as John Gray does. I would give him a piece of my mind on the subject, were it not that he might accuse me of unwarrantable interference in family matters."

"John means well," replied Fanny. "His antecedents were unfavorable for teaching him right ideas of woman's duties and woman's strength. He measures our dear, gentle Rose by his mother, whose constitution is one of a thousand."

"She is no woman," said Raymond; "she is made, soul and body, of cast-iron. The man that dared marry her must have been brave as Julius Caesar. No wonder he died young! I should have expired before the ceremony was over, granting that I had survived the courtship. But, to return to the original question, your girls leave off work at tea-time. Has Rose learned to imitate Mamma Gray so well that she forces the ill-used Catherine to rub at the wash-board after dark? Why cannot she sit by Hetty's cradle long enough to allow the real servant leisure to take tea here?"

"Just what I proposed; but Rose 'never liked to ask extra work from the help on busy days, especially Monday.' One thing I can do

—send her a portion from the bountiful supply of dainties with which my husband has crowned my birth-night board.”

Accordingly, while Mr. and Mrs. Gray sat at their early tea, the neat-handed Bessie made her entry, bearing a tray whereon were placed a glass dish of ripe, odorous strawberries, a silver pitcher of “genuwine” cream, and a plate of frosted cake, with “Mrs. Parkhurst’s compliments, and many happy returns of the day.”

Rose’s face and appetite were alike quickened into vivacity at the sight. The cool, acid fruit was what she had longed for through all the melting day. John had suffered an equal thirst, appeased by sundry glasses of “cream soda, with pure fruit syrups,” imbibed unpremeditatedly, as he happened to be passing certain druggists in his street. His wife “was at liberty to do likewise,” he would have said, if taxed with selfishness in this particular. So she was, if she had not had the baby to tend, the house-work to do, a cross servant in the kitchen to coax and humor, and if the soda-fountains so convenient to his store had not been half a mile from his residence. He was hungry to-night, and, after his wife’s omissions in the usual bill of fare had been noticed—attributed to Catherine’s “Irish stupidity,” and generously assumed by the virtual maid of all work, as she repaired her negligence—he contrived to swallow a tolerable meal, to which strawberries and cream were no unwelcome adjunct.

We have slandered John Gray, if the reader is led to consider him as unkind or unfeeling. He was a thorough man of business, and, apart from his strong affection for his wife and child, he possessed a sterling sense of right and honor, that would have caused him to provide well for his family; to see that, so far as he knew, they should want for nothing. He was not, strictly speaking, a liberal housekeeper, but he was too just to be parsimonious. Rose might have had whatever she needed or wished, for the mere asking; but, with a queer perversity, not uncommon in more courageous wives, the asking was to her the most unpleasant task in the world. We know a lady whose practice it is to lay her empty portemonnaie, its open month testifying to its condition, upon her husband’s dressing-case before he arises in the morning; and she assures us that its mute eloquence never fails to accomplish the desired effect. We know another, whose name we prefer not to mention for especial private reasons (one of which is a praiseworthy fear of

tempting the less fortunate to a violation of the tenth commandment), whose drawer is visited—not periodically, that would imply a stated allowance, but at uncertain intervals, always short, however—by some perennial Santa Claus, who, no matter how often he may find leanness and poverty of pocket, never fails to leave a purse like an aldermanic oyster behind him.

To neither of these systems did John Gray incline. Family expenses, including bills for dry-goods and fancy articles, were defrayed by him personally, and he had no suspicion of any use which a woman could, in these circumstances, have for money, unless for five dollars or so a quarter, wherewith to purchase confectionery. Although it has no immediate bearing upon our story, we may here revert to the fact that Rose’s private hoard consisted of a forlorn three cent piece at the period of which we are speaking, and that she was no poorer than she had been for weeks.

“Raymond is a good fellow, but disposed to be extravagant,” John said, as Rose replenished his saucer with fruit. “Strawberries are dear at this season.”

“But how delicious!” answered Rose. “I have not tasted anything so delightful in an age. Then, too, this is an extraordinary occasion—Fanny’s birthday.”

She did not add “and mine,” lest he might imagine that a hint lurked in the sentence.

“Did I tell you that he had bought a horse and carriage?” asked Mr. Gray.

“No; but they called here as they were taking their first drive this afternoon. The whole affair was a surprise-gift to Fauny.”

“Indeed! She had notified him of a hankering for it, no doubt. Fan is stylish in her notions—rather gay. I trust she will not tempt her husband too far.”

“It is her nature to be lively,” returned Rose; “but nothing was more foreign to her intentions than to ask for a carriage of her own. Cannot Raymond afford it, my dear?”

“Why, yes; that is, the expense will be covered by his income; but so could I ‘afford’ a hundred follies which it would be unwise to commit. A young man should lay by something every year—every month, in fact, against a rainy day.”

“Raymond has insured his life for the benefit of his family,” said Rose, who both loved and admired her brother-in-law.

“True. And if he is content that they will be moderately well off in the event of his decease, it is none of our business what becomes of the rest of his money.”

Hetty's fretful cry, at awakening, here summoned her mother to the nursery. Mr. Gray read the evening paper in the snug library, and then went up stairs. Rose was in the act of depositing the babe in the crib. "Sh-sh-sh," she whispered, at her husband's entrance, and, as the child's slumber outlasted her transfer, a sigh of weariness, intense and inexpressible, escaped the much-enduring parent.

"You look jaded," remarked John, kindly. "Go to bed early, and get a good night's rest. I have an engagement with a country customer at the — Hotel at eight o'clock, and cannot say definitely at what hour I shall be home. Do not sit up for me."

Rose had been revolving the bold plan of coaxing Catherine to pass an hour in the nursery while John and herself should step up to see Fanny, and thank her for her recent kindness; and the frustration of this simple desire cost her, in her worn and tired state, a flood of tears so soon as her husband's back was turned.

The outer air was invigorating after the confined atmosphere of the house, and John enjoyed its freshness, as he walked slowly up to the hotel. The engagement was neither tedious nor unprofitable. It was not nine o'clock when the merchant found himself in his own street, and opposite his partner's dwelling. The windows were open, and the sound of merry music rang out blithely into the night.

"I may as well look in upon them," he decided, after a moment's pause. And he rang the bell.

Fanny was at the piano, Raymond standing behind her with his flute. There was no one else present.

"I called in to offer the compliments of the occasion—to say, 'many happy returns,' etc.," said John, shaking hands with them both. "May your shadow never grow less, Fan, and you live a thousand years!"

"I wish you had afforded us the chance to say the same to Rose," replied Raymond. "We were disappointed that you could not celebrate the joint birth-night here."

"Joint birth-night!" echoed John. "How forgetful I am! It has not crossed my mind before that you were born on the same day of the month. Why did not Rose remind me of it? And that was the meaning of the very proper message Bessie delivered with your most acceptable donation to our tea, Fanny? It struck me as being decidedly Hibernian in its construction."

There was an awkward silence of an instant; John was disposed to be aggrieved at his wife's

reserve, and his hosts were sympathizing with her in the causes that had induced this reticence, and marvelling that no pang of self-blame at his forgetfulness worried him. The temporary embarrassment was quickly over, and a social, friendly chat of nearly an hour followed.

"Bring Rose with you the next time you come, and let that be soon," was Fanny's parting request.

"I will, if I can; but she is growing wilfully domestic," answered John.

The phrase recurred to him with painful force as he contrasted the exterior of his dwelling, dark and desolate-looking, save for a dim light in the second story, with the light and music he had just left. Rose was asleep, with Hetty upon her arm. So profound was her repose that she did not stir at her husband's entrance. The care-worn lines had not passed from her face, and John stood over her, scanning every feature with a mingling of pity and discontent.

"She might be ten, instead of two years older than Fanny," he said to himself. "She was much prettier than her sister when we were married; but, poor girl! she is not now. What can be the reason that some women break so much faster than others?"

(Conclusion next month.)